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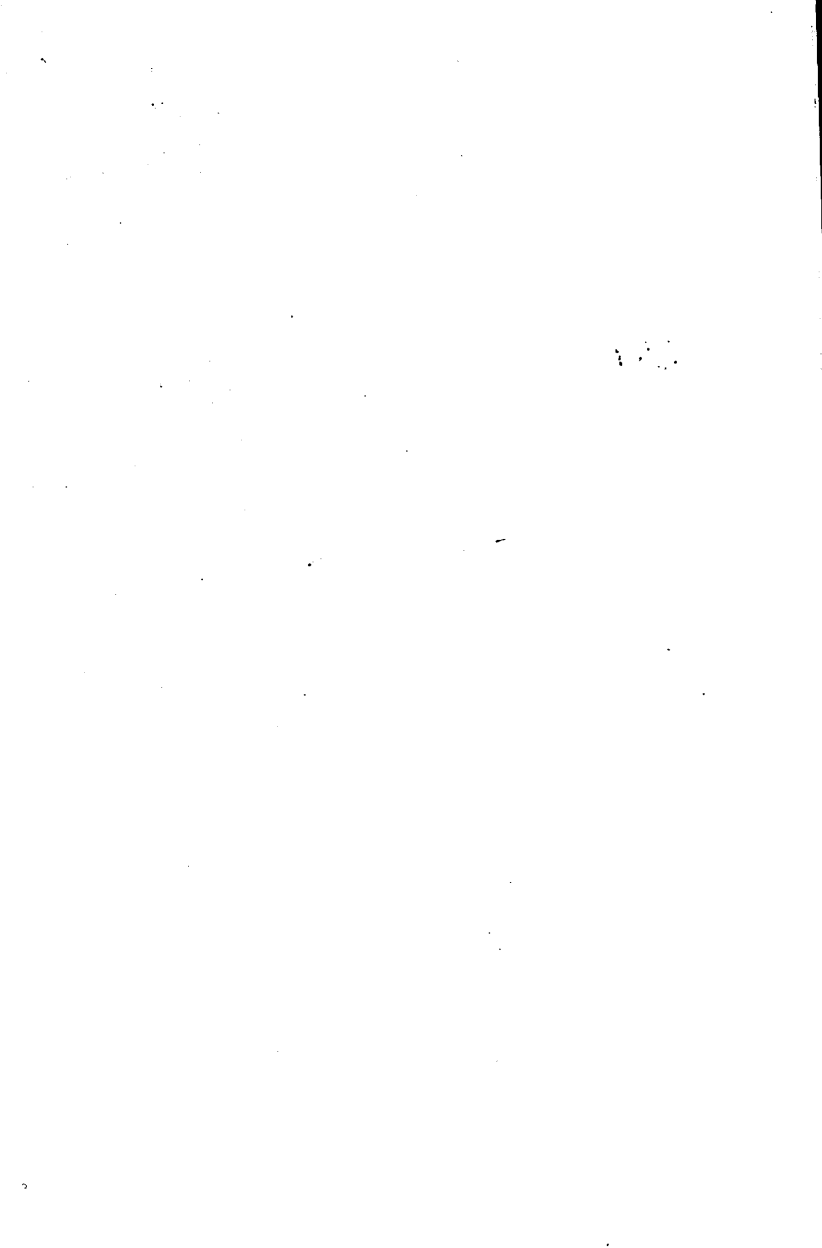
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REV JAMES A. O'CONNOR.
Director of "Christ's Mission," New York.



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CONFLICT AND CONQUEST.

The Experiences of Father Flynn.

BY

GEO. C. NEEDHAM.

Author of "The Spiritual Life," "Man and His Mirror," "Plan of the Ages," etc.



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PREFACE.

FOURTH EDITION.

THE story of "Father Flynn" goes forth again on its ministry of love, in new dress, and with numerous illustrations. I am deeply thankful that there is now a home provided for the shelter of priests whose consciences will not allow them to abide in the Church of Rome, and who need a place of retirement during anxious days of inquiry and investigation. The founder and director of "Christ's Mission," Rev. James A. O'Connor, 142 West Twenty-first Street, New York, has received under his hospitable roof many priests of different nationalities. Some are now pastors of evangelical churches, others are in theological seminaries in preparation for the ministry of the word, while not a few have entered upon commercial pursuits.

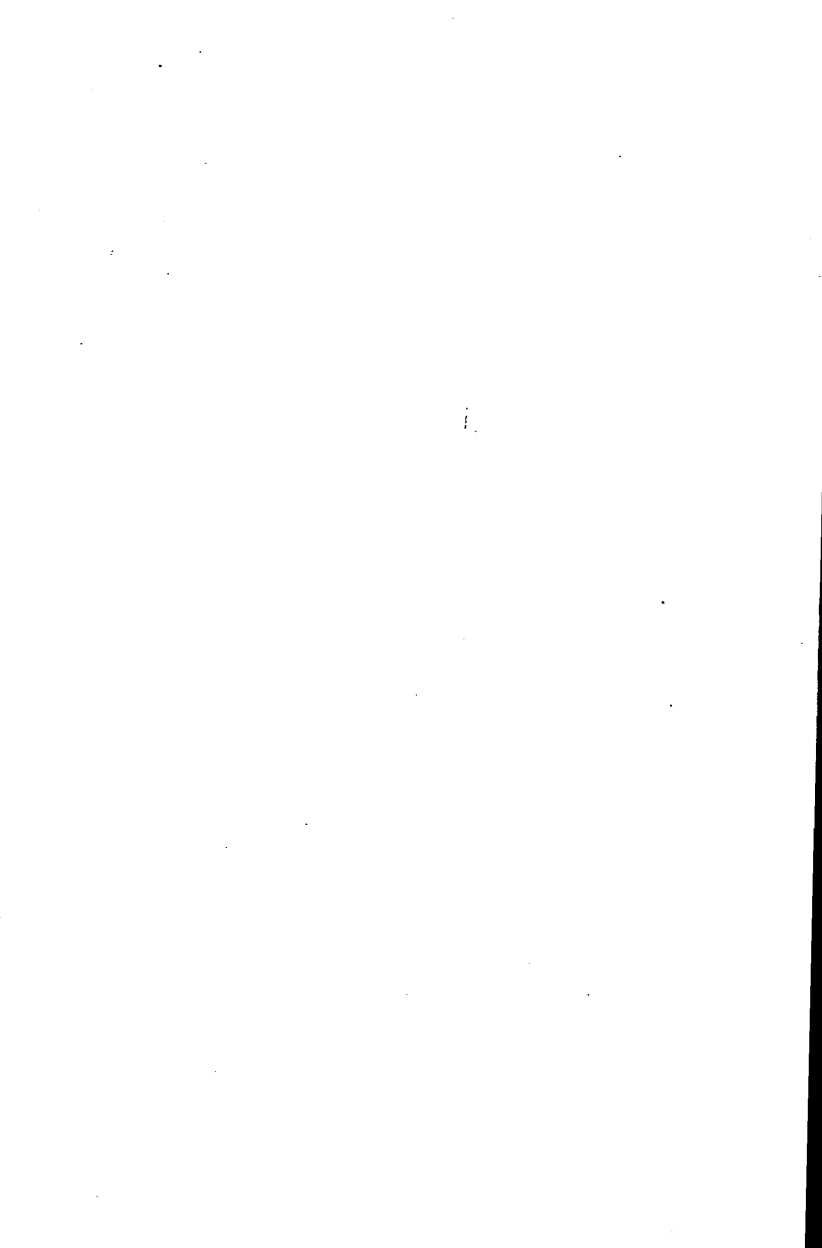
The story of our hero, "Father Flynn," explains many of the difficulties attending an escape from the Jesuits to Jesus.

GEO. C. NEEDHAM.

EAST NORTHFIELD, Mass.

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Mrs. JAMES A. O'CONNOR

FATHER FLYNN.

CHAPTER I.

THE PRIEST'S HOLIDAY.

THE political, commercial, social, and religious life of the Irish people has been a subject of interest throughout every civilized land. Prophets, chiefly of the dreamy type, have predicted Ireland's future gloom and glory; sages and statesmen have planned her best forms of government according to their respective judgments—varied enough! Artists and poets have portrayed, by pen and pencil, her blemishes and her beauty. Her mystic traditions, legends, and superstitions have commanded the attention of scholars, while antiquarians and archæologists have endeavored to decipher her manuscripts and her monuments. Her religious instincts have called out a multitude of theories from theologians and ecclesiastics,



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while historians have delved into ages past to find her origin, hitherto concealed from mortal ken. An impenetrable mystery surrounds her genesis. Antiquities, ancient towers, venerable monasteries, and hoary castles have been laid under tribute, but refused to divulge the unquestioned secret of Ireland's aboriginals. Of our Gallic fathers two thousand years ago, we have this information: that they were "good soldiers, but poor organizers; brave and dashing rather than methodical or persevering; impossible to subdue even when conquered; excitable, impulsive, and quick in resentment, but generous and warmhearted; brilliant in wit and ingenuity, of intense patriotism and deep religious convictions."

This characterization does not need to be revised in describing Ireland for two milleniums; as we enter upon the third, it must undergo a change. For our Ireland is passing onwards towards a crisis. The gay, happy-go-lucky life of the peasantry is taking on a sombre hue; the shiftlessness of the past is becoming more than industry — the spirit of greed for gold and its accompanying spectre, discontent, stalks abroad. Whether this metamorphosis of the Irish nature is for weal or woe we will not predict. Has Ireland been impoverished through

misgovernment? Will she be restored to prosperity by legal enactments? Is she indeed free from every curse but that of poverty? England has not been kind or just toward her weaker sister; for her governmental injustice and race prejudice she must suffer. But are there no deep-seated evils working in the Irish race for which they are themselves responsible? Surely the symptoms which come to the surface are not from grievances laid on, but from the gangrene within. There is a disease virulent, all-consuming, deadening alike to intellect, conscience, and faith. And there is a remedy, thanks be unto God, more radical, more potential than statutes, bills, governmental reforms, or home legislation. We must therefore hasten towards an illustrated explanation of this true elixir of life.

.

In a lovely though obscure parish of Ireland there lived and labored a devoted priest whose ministrations were unremitting, and whose love for his parishioners led him to brave the darkest night or dreariest journey in order to attend upon the dying, to dry the orphan's tear, or to comfort the widow's heart.

Father Murty — in full the Rev. Murtagh Flynn — was a kindhearted, genial, whole-souled

man, zealous in parish duties, and charitably disposed towards all men. His bishop, on the other hand, was a keen-eyed ecclesiastic, gaunt and grim from constant meditation on schemes for church advancement and personal preferment. He closely watched the good-natured priest whom he suspected. There was no neglect of priestly duties, but he had reason for knowing that Father Flynn was not sufficiently strict toward his penitents, and that he frequently allowed them to escape from well-merited penance.

And indeed, Father Murty was most un-catholic in some things. "Arrah, you poor child," he would say to a youthful transgressor, "don't be bothering your silly head in thrying to think of sins you never committed. Shure the likes of you could no more break a commandment than the blessed Virgin herself. Get up off your knees, my dear, and receive my blessing." Such indulgence from a father confessor would lessen the revenue of the Church, and however agreeable to the priest's feelings, it stung to the quick the overweening and sensitive bishop, who by some hook or crook heard of these things. "Be the powers," a harmless expression often on Father Flynn's lips — "Be the powers, shure half my parish are innocent children, an' the

other half are such simple-hearted creatures they wouldn't kill a fly. I wish it was the ould fox himself [the bishop] I had in the confessional, be dad, for shure I'd thrap him." After this admission to himself, the jovial priest indulged in a peal of laughter at the striking figure of speech with which he so aptly characterized the "big man."

Father Flynn was a child of nature, of rustic feeling and rugged frame. He loved horses and dogs; the bishop loved neither. When his own convenience or comfort was advanced through their agency, he showed some little interest in them. He had no objection to the fine hare killed by the priest's famous greyhound Nancy, when presented to him by Nancy's master. He was even seen to pat the priest's horse Music after conveying him twenty miles on an important visit. But the bishop was extraordinarily good-natured on that day, going far beyond his niggard disposition, inquiring even into Music's pedigree and value. The bishop had horses of his own, but he thought of them only as so much machinery, like his carriages. Weightier matters of the law in relation to Church and State engrossed the thoughts of this consequential dignitary; why should he give his attention or affection to animals — or to human beings either?

Circumstances were ordinary at the parish of Turf Bog and with its priest Father Murty, including the occasional hints given by the loyal bishop concerning the priest's laxity generally and his hare-hunting particularly. True, the bishop himself was a mighty hunter, slim as the famed greyhound, with as keen an eye for game. But the game was larger and worthy of such an ecclesiastical sportsman. He would hunt a heretic to the death, and never paused to question conscience when he set his traps for Protestant "gentry." Circumstances, I have said, were ordinary in Father Flynn's parish, until one day the rotund and smiling priest started on a two weeks' vacation. He had not been in Dublin more than half a dozen times since leaving Maynooth College, the last visit having been paid two years prior to the above date. Then he was sent by the bishop to the leaders of the Nationalist party to make inquiry concerning a political movement in its relation to the Church. Bishop O'Dowd held direct communication with the Vatican on Irish political and ecclesiastical affairs; and being at this time indisposed, he entrusted Father Murty with this delicate mission, meanwhile fretting inwardly lest the simple-hearted priest should involve the Jesuitical bishop by his artless frankness.

Father Flynn hated Jesuitism as hotly as he loved dogs. Being a good lover, he could be a good hater. He was an ardent lover of his country and her people, but feared political and secret leagues, if for no better reason than that O'Dowd slyly encouraged them. The jovial priest, on principle, took the opposite view of his bishop on all political questions. "Be the powers," he would say to himself, "how can a green-eyed Jesuit see anything in its true light?"¹ He loved fair dealing, and with other Irish priests fought for honesty, purity, and justice. But he was imprudently outspoken, a sorry quality in any servant of the Vatican. It was therefore well known that he despised the cunning intrigues of the Jesuits. O'Dowd often wished he had never sent the blunt priest on that errand.

But now Father Flynn is entering the city he dearly loved, free from every responsibility. He is without a care, eager for a stroll through Phoenix Park to chat with the natives, or poke fun at the youthful constables.

Arriving at Kingsbridge railroad station he alighted from the train before even thinking of lodgings. "Be the powers," said he aloud, for

¹ The bishop was not officially connected with the order of the Jesuits though thoroughly Jesuitical in nature and practice.

his thoughts were generally outspoken, — one of his eccentricities, — “where shall I deposit me bag while I hunt up me temporary quarters?” “This way, your reverence,” smote his ear in pure Milesian brogue, as if in response to his question; and before him stood the red-faced cabman, whip in hand, jerking his thumb over his shoulder, indicating that his cab was close by. “I did n’t speak to you, me man,” said Father Flynn, “but anyhow, how do you propose to dispose of me, if I unreservedly commit myself, a holy father, to your carnal hands? Now out with it, me modern Jehu!” The good priest chuckled to himself after this wordy badinage, a habit in which he occasionally indulged when in conversation with the peasantry.

The Jehu was nonplused by this superfine appeal rattled off like a Hail Mary or a Gloria Patri. But Father Flynn, knowing the power of the vernacular, let loose his tongue on the unfortunate cabby. “Be the powers, I believe you are an idiot. Shut your pratee-thrap, you *bosthoon*,¹ and don’t stare at me wid your two eyes like saucers burstin’ out av your impty head. Dhrive me to The Goleen.”

In former years every good Catholic quaked

¹ Big boy.

before an irate priest, but under the tutelage of professional politicians the Irish peasantry are losing reverence for the clergy, and stand in less fear of them. Occasionally, however, country boys are met with who are more alarmed by the frown of a priest than with the blackest thundercloud. The bolt could only kill the body, while the priest's curse could destroy both soul and body in hell! Peter Delaney, the driver, who undesignedly stirred the amiable priest, and brought upon himself a torrent of good-natured abuse, was a recent importation to the city. He had not lost his country superstition, and fancied a metamorphosis would then and there take place. Would the priest change him into a butting goat or into a timid rabbit? Peter's wits were wool-gathering, nor would he have leaped so nimbly to his seat, if Father Flynn had not recalled his senses by crying out, "What are you waiting for, you *omadhaun*?"¹ Nevertheless Peter pinched himself several times, and spoke to his horse purposely to hear his own voice, in order that he might be fully assured he was not already changed into a goat or rabbit. "Faix," said he, "I had a narrow escape. I thought the horns were pushing out through me hat, and I felt like puckin' his fat body."

¹ Big fool.

As the cab rattled over the stony pavement, Father Flynn's eye caught sight of a board lifted by an old woman, on which was pasted a notice. Another and still another appeared to view.

He therefore read the following announcement:—

—— HALL.

MR. ———, EVANGELIST, WILL (D. V.) PREACH THE
GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD, THIS EVENING
AT 8 O'CLOCK.

ALL ARE WELCOME.

"God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us."

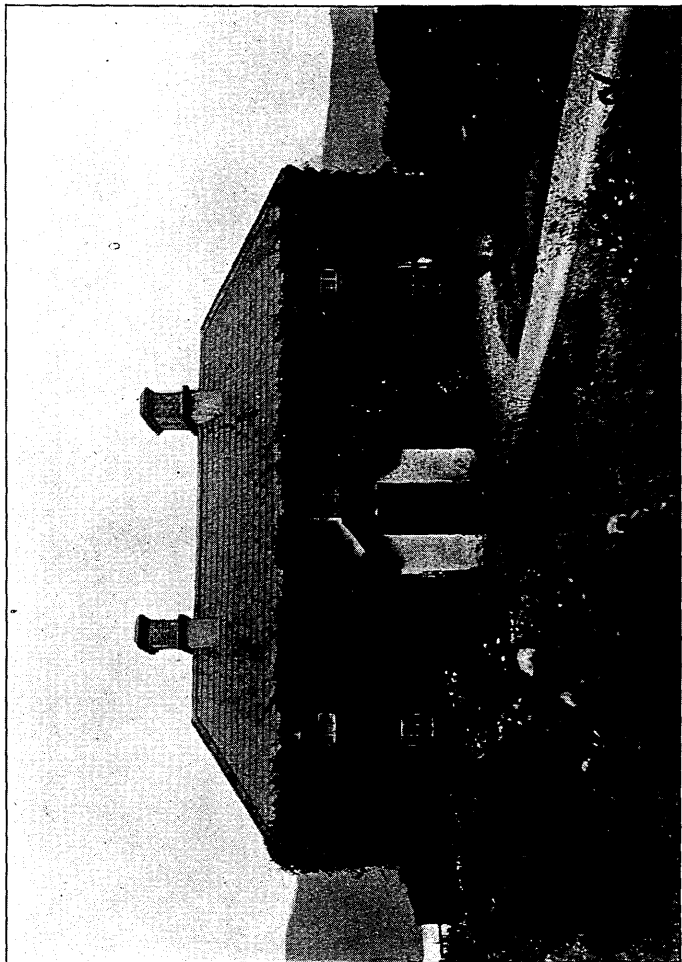
"'The Gospel of the Grace of God,'" soliloquized the priest. "I don't ever remember meeting with that sentence before. It is a poetic phrase, rhythmical, alliterative. 'Gospel,' 'Grace,' 'God.' Be the powers, there it is again!" as another poor old creature dressed in rags fixed her eyes upon him and asked charity while the cab was detained in a crowded street. Father Flynn was a generous man. He handed her a sixpence, meantime inquiring how much she earned. "A shilling a day *and me boord*," replied the saucy hag as she passed on. "The poor creatures," murmured the priest; "their

wit comes as natural as a grunt from a mule or a kick from a pig," delightfully unconscious of the *bull* he had made in his *unnatural* reversal of these animals' habits.

Leaning back in his cab, a keen observer could readily perceive that the priest's mind was busy with other thoughts. "'Gospel,' 'Grace,' 'God.' Aye," he added, "I think I see a glimmer of light," as he recalled the scripture text on the bills, "*God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.*" "The meaning of 'Gospel,' I know is 'glad tidings,' but 'Grace' I do not understand unless it be this: God loved sinners *as sinners*. Christ died for sinners *as sinners*. Be the powers, that must be it. I thought he only loved *saints*, and dear help me, I always knew I was not much of a saint, though I think I'm still far ahead of the ould Jesuit." He then repeated a Hail Mary, and added, "O Virgin Mary, intercede for me; Saint Joseph, pray for me; my Guardian Angel, protect me; all ye Saints and Angels of heaven, pray for me. Amen." But neither in the remnant of self-righteousness of which he had boasted, nor from this prayer which he had so fervently uttered, did he derive comfort. Having reached the door of The Goleen, he was

shown to his room, where he further indulged in these reflections, which resulted in exciting within him a curiosity to hear this "Gospel of the Grace of God."





An Irish Cottage Home ; Former Residence of the Needham Family.

CHAPTER II.

AN IMPORTANT DECISION.

IRELAND, religiously and industrially, is generally divided into two parts, geographically denominated North and South. The North is Protestant—the South Roman Catholic; the North is wealthy, the South poor. But these distinctions are only comparative. Scattered throughout the Northern counties are thousands of Catholics, both gentry and peasantry, while throughout the Southern portions of the island are many scattered Protestant families. But by far the largest part of the population South, West, and East, are adherents of the Papacy. The North is almost solidly Protestant. In that district of country where Father Flynn first saw the light of day there were Protestant farmers with whom his father was on excellent terms. The people of both religions had lived in happy accord. There, as in other parishes, good-will would have continued, were it not, that, in recent years political demagogues led by priestly agitators excited their co-religionists to factionism and lawlessness. But Timothy Flynn



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would not be coerced, and his children were permitted to mingle with the Protestant youth of his neighborhood. Murty being a lively lad, was quite a favorite in their youthful sports. This unrestrained intercourse with his heretical companions gave him a decided dislike to religious persecution. While the youngsters played afield or gossiped by the fireside, young Flynn, like others similarly situated, grew up to respect his Protestant neighbors. Unconsciously to himself, that deep-seated prejudice, born of traditional bigotry, and nursed in ignorance, was wearing away. This was also true of his parents. The dislike to everything not in harmony with the Church lay upon the surface of their nature. Murty's protestant playmates of both sexes were not little devils, nor did he ever hear them threaten to blow up St. Peter's or poison the sovereign Pontiff. Moreover, when Father Murphy on one occasion held a station at the cabin of Flynn senior, and indulged in sarcastic reflections upon the conduct of Protestants generally, Timothy spoke up rather sharply, "Faix, Father Bat, you should thry an' make betther christians of us, than be tellin' lies about our neighbors." The priest's coarse remarks had also roused young Murty, who grinned behind the priest's back.

Happily for our hero his lot had fallen in pleasant places. Through the self-denial of his admiring

parents he was sent to a preparatory school before entering Maynooth. The pride of Irish families who are blest with a son in the priesthood is of the most sublimated type. What, then, must be the poignant grief of loving parents who slave for their children, when a son of the Church forsakes the religion of his people? Too often, alas, the mouth that kissed will curse, and the hand which shielded will smite. Parents have sought the death of children in order to ensure their final salvation, rather than have their souls endangered through Protestant affiliations.

Thoughts like these passed through Father Flynn's mind while reaching a decision. He had determined to visit a Protestant place of worship—an accursed thing according to the standards of his Church, but he had lived long enough to know that Rome's curses often come home to roost. Innocent curiosity was not his motive. He, like other priests, had a conscience ill at ease; his heart was unsatisfied. He could not hide from himself the fear that absolution from the lips of a sinful brother priest was but a mocking delusion; his soul thirsted for the water of life. "Be dad," said he, once after confession, "it was n't enough to be on my knees before Father Cassidy repeating the Confiteor with me will diabolically enslaved, and me soul bowed in the dust on account of

me sins, and they are many, but to have me prospect of peace ruined by me gentleman asking me, with the absolution scarcely out of his mouth, to come round to the house and he'd give me a nate dhrop which came from Patsey Lahey's still! An' that same Patsey as big a blackguard as you'd find from here to Cork. But be the powers, if he's too smart for the police, Father Cassidy can collar him, and absolve him too, for a jug of the native." Those were some of Father Flynn's cogitations, spoken aloud as was his custom, especially when deeply moved. They indicate his condition, which he rightly described in his prayer after confession: "I am weary in pursuit of empty toys, seeking in vain to satisfy my thirst with muddy waters, and my hunger with the husks fit only for swine."

Father Flynn had found his room at The Goleen bare of comforts, yet clean and tidy. In addition to the bed, there was a small table which held a pitcher and basin, two chairs, and a dwarfish chest of drawers, entirely too common to be dignified with the name of bureau. There were a few cheap prints on the wall: one of the holy family, another representing the crucifixion; the third looked like an English squire of half a century ago, but we could

hardly expect an Englishman to be so honored in The Goleen. It was a picture of the great Irish agitator, Daniel O'Connell. The room was carpetless, but the country priest was unaccustomed to luxuries. He ate heartily, slept well, kept himself tolerably tidy, and what more did he require? He had no artificial wants, and was therefore delightfully regardless of artificial luxuries. After a refreshing wash, he ordered supper. It was served in his room, as he wished to be alone. During the progress of the meal he became abstracted. His eyes looked into vacancy while he revolved within himself the only theory of salvation known to him. He knew it lacked in power, and felt humiliated over its failure, and terrified with the fear of dying unprepared. Suddenly an unconscious smile broke over his features, while a morsel of meat poised on the fork remained untasted; for before his mental vision floated in letters of light the magic sentence, "THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD," followed by that sublime passage, "*God commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.*" And even as these words melted away there stood out clearly defined in large capitals the simple legend

HALL.

Then the spell was broken, the priest turned his attention to the unfinished supper, a quiet resolve possessed him as he exclaimed, "I'll go! Yes," he added, "be the powers, I will! 'Tis surely no sin to hear 'the Gospel of the Grace of God,' and though this Gospel Hall may be a heresy-shop, how can it harm a truly and duly consecrated priest of the Holy—Catholic—Church?" Even while finishing this speech, drawling out the final words, he looked in the mirror and actually detected himself winking in a very decided manner.

"What will the ould fox say?" he added, "for be the powers he'll hear of it, shure as I put sugar in me tea," suiting the action to the words as he dropped the lumps into his cup. "Still an' all," he went on, "is it right for a priest to fear his bishop? Is n't the slavery of conscience the worst kind of slavery? Why should a Jesuit or the Pope himself interfere with me private judgment in things pertaining to God?" With the suddenness of alarm, fearing he had fallen under the power of the Evil One, he lifted his hands and, looking upward, uttered the fervent prayer, "May the Lord forgive me if I have been guilty of blasphemy." Even then he wished for a father confessor, while rapidly through his mind went the usual

form of confession: "I confess to Almighty God, to blessed Mary, ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the saints, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed; through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault."

We must not rashly judge the priest as a man of whims and contrarities. Not permitted to think for himself, he was the subject of unceasing conflict between conscientious loyalty to the Church and his own inherent instincts towards spiritual freedom. Between the impulses toward individual independence and servile submission to ecclesiastical authority, the priest was crushed; at times he upbraided himself for disloyal sentiments, and anon despised himself for bartering away his manhood. One of the most aggressive Catholic priests whom we had known personally, who fought Protestantism openly and savagely, was Protestant at heart. His liberalism of thought became known at Rome, hence he lost a bishopric. Though a most learned man, whose name and fame reached every part of Ireland, he was yet considered dangerous. Having refused to become a machine, he was left to die unrewarded.

Father Flynn was not singular in his sufferings; other priests too well know the agony of this inward conflict: conflict between an enlightened judgment and an enslaved conscience. But on this occasion courage prevailed over cowardice, and conscience dared ecclesiastical censure. For even as he mentally rehearsed the confession, he was busy in effecting a simple disguise, and sallied forth, cautiously inquiring the way to —— Hall.



CHAPTER III.

CONSCIENCE OR TRADITION?

THE priest sheltered himself amid a group of people entering the building, and soon found himself seated in the auditorium. He sat quite low, casting furtive glances on either side, until the announcement of a hymn called his eyes toward the pulpit. He was considerably embarrassed when a motherly lady handed him an opened hymn book. This act of courtesy was rendered with delicate grace, while the nod and smile assured him, a stranger, there was no occasion for shyness. Instantly he thought of his mother. Could she by some unknown law of telepathy, or second vision, know that just then her holy son was in danger of spiritual pollution? He glanced toward the door, and would have left the building but the aisle was filled with incoming worshippers. The lady observed his nervousness, and rightly suspected that this was some modern Nicodemus coming to Jesus by night, and from her Christian soul ascended the prayer of ejaculation for the unknown man, who had no doubt come there with

an anxious desire, to learn something of the grace of God.

The preacher read the hymn with modulated voice and in measured cadences. It soothed the priest. He had been for some hours the subject of contending emotions; the sweet poem, new to him, allayed his mental excitement. He had not specially noticed its theology until the congregation engaged in the worship of song. A precentor led without an instrument; there was no choir to monopolize the praise; no professional singers to disturb that godly congregation with their Italian airs and unmeaning renditions. The tune was commonplace but strong, cheerful but not frivolous. The people wore a serious aspect, as if conscious of transacting business with heaven. The priest felt subdued; a hush fell upon his inmost soul; the words of the hymn so devoutly rendered by the great congregation fitted exactly into his conscious moral needs. It entered his heart, hitherto locked, through ignorance, against the gospel of grace. Perhaps it will drive back the rusty bolt, so that through the open door will shine into his soul the light of life.

As the loud shout of fervent praise from a thousand voices filled the spacious house, the visitor became painfully reflective. He forgot

his office, he lost sight of his priestly sanctity; the light revealed him to himself a sinful man. As an ecclesiastic he had never enjoyed *the certain knowledge of pardon*. Rome had long since decreed through her teachers that the assurance of salvation was *a prime error of heretics*. Like others upon whose conscience the light of Sinai had flashed, he feared the coming judgment. He had been no stranger to the working of his own fleshly nature; he had often loathed himself because that even in moments of religious duties strange passions moved him, horrid blasphemies assailed him, and unrighteous thoughts chased each other like hideous spectres across the fields of his inner life. Was there no help for him? no Saviour, who would not only forgive the past, but who could also give him victory over sinful propensities in the present? The theology of the hymn was not altogether new to him, for as a papal priest he had been indoctrinated in the historical record of our Lord's death, and often moved by its recital. The passion of the cross was not a fresh truth, but somehow the teaching of the hymn made it now more potential to his soul. It was peculiarly appropriate to his troubled conscience, while it played havoc with his Romish traditions. He was yet oblivious of the

fact that in proportion as he received its sentiment he was preparing himself for excommunication. But why should he break the charming spell now upon him? — a *good spell* indeed!

How little we know what a harvest our seed-sowing will produce! He that soweth to the flesh shall reap a sorry harvest indeed, but he that soweth seeds of gospel truth by voice or pen is truly wise in his generation. The great Isaac Watts devoted the strength of his mind to hymn-writing. It was one of his productions which now winged its way to the heart of the priest. The brain that conceived and the hand which penned the hymn had long been still in death. But though dead, his spiritual songs live. Pity that such hymns are relegated to obscurity by a large portion of our professedly religious people. Modern hymns have supplanted them. Hymns, did I say — yes, peerless, scriptural, poetic, elevating. Nevertheless, there is a vast multitude of silly rhymes, jingles, ditties, lacking ideas, wanting in truth, without sense; vapid nothings, wordy sentimental emptiness, called hymns. They are written by the yard, sold by the ton, and sung by the million. They deteriorate worship, prostitute praise, and dishonor Him whose name should not be flippantly sung nor frivo-

lously spoken, and whose Majesty ought not to be insulted by familiar terms of endearment which are suitable only between intimate friends or youthful lovers. Hymn-writers like Dr. Watts are not sufficiently appreciated. New and infantile theology must have nursery rhymes; spiritual Mother Goose's melodies are the lullabys for the cradle-Christians of our day.

The singing continued, while the priest reflected on the sublime truth uttered in the verse: —

“Not all the blood of beasts,
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away the stain.”

The people were giving earnest voice to the next verse,

“But Christ the heavenly Lamb
Takes all our sins away;”

when instantly the conviction enforced itself upon the priest, What need then of penance? of absolution? of purgatory? His mind is abnormally active. He takes mental notes of this heretical theology, yet dislikes it not; he dare not think evil of it. Why should he refuse to acknowledge the full worth of Christ's

atoning blood? For does not his Testament teach most authoritatively that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin (1 John 1 : 7; 1 Peter 1 : 18, 19). Already his heart is enlisted as they sing :—

“My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of thine,
While like a penitent I stand,
And there confess my sin.”

To the volume of song rendered by the great congregation with heart and voice, Father Flynn's poetical nature was fully alive. He was more than interested, he was deeply affected, nor could he refrain from silent tears as the worshipers sang :—

“My soul looks back to see
The burdens thou didst bear
When hanging on the cursed tree,
And knows her guilt was there.

Believing we rejoice
To see the curse remove;
We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice,
And sing his bleeding love.”

Isaac Watts rightly understood the divine scheme of salvation which he in this grand hymn so scripturally depicted. He restrained

poetic fancy, lest, like an untamed steed, he may carry his trusting reader beyond the point of safety. The poet is a preacher: he should therefore assure himself well that he is treading along the right way; that he is journeying in the right direction in order to give convincing expression to his descriptions or appeals. Poets unclean of life and impure in thought, whose feet tread forbidden paths, are false teachers. A tainted fountain cannot give pure water. When sottish men write eulogies on the pleasures of virtue, the devil laughs them to scorn. Not so, such men as Watts. He knew Whom he believed. He trusted in Jesus Christ for personal salvation; hence his own assurance and peace. What a contrast the hymn which so deeply moved the priest, to the following piece of profanation:—

“Heart of Jesus, I adore thee,
Heart of Mary, I implore thee,
Heart of Joseph, pure and just,
In these three hearts I place my trust.”

That an educated priest with well-trained sensibilities, a man, too, of stern resolve, should be affected by a simple melody is no enigma to those who have been enlightened by the Holy Scriptures on the sovereign ministry of the Holy

Spirit. The conceited philosopher, the proud skeptic, and the superstitious priest are alike clay in the hand of the divine Potter. He can break, and bend, and mold as He will; He can open the fountains of the great deep in the human soul when it doth please Him so to do; the savage and the child are equally plastic in His hand. Nevertheless we are invited to co-operate with Him in His ministry of mercy, and to put ourselves into harmony with His gracious operations. Father Flynn was now under the Spirit's blessed influences, though he knew it not. Hitherto the Third Person of the blessed Trinity had a place in his theology, but his heart was not His temple.

After the congregation sang the hymn, the preacher offered a prayer of invocation. It was a purely extemporaneous prayer, neither read from a prayer-book nor recited from memory. The local allusions and references to present circumstances assured the priest that it was not the repetition of anything previously manufactured, but rather a prayer born into newness of life as each utterance left the preacher's lips. Its simplicity of style, earnestness of petition, definiteness of thanksgiving, and withal its devout reverence, as if the worshiper stood with unshod feet in the presence of the dread Holy

One — the recognition of relationship with God, as that of child and father, awed the priest into a profound solemnity, while it produced within him a consciously joyful confidence that this prayer was truly registered in heaven. The petitioner acknowledged and confessed all lack of merit; that righteousness was not found in the creature; that all had sinned and justly deserved everlasting punishment. He also thankfully referred to God's condescending love in giving His only begotten Son; to the completed atonement made by that Son — Son of God and son of the blessed Virgin — who, on the cross as the Sacrifice for sin, put sin away; for His blood so precious, so potential, that it alone cancels sin, yea blots it out of God's book of remembrance, and purges the defiled conscience of every contrite sinner trusting in Jesus. In the prayer allusion was made to the presence and work of the Holy Spirit, by whose ministry of grace the humble Christian is made victorious over every form of temptation. The absence of petition to virgin or saint was noticed by Father Flynn, though the omission had not startled him. He had heard that Protestants hated both Mary the mother of our Lord and every saint in the calendar, but had not yet learned that this charge is an absurd falsehood.

To their affections the memory of the Virgin is very dear, but they do not worship her nor seek her intercession; doing so would rob Jesus of the glory belonging to Him as the only Priest and Intercessor. When the priest now heard allusions of profound respect towards the blessed Virgin, and all the saints who shall join in the great song of redemption, his unjustifiable prejudices were instantly swept away. He thought if this preacher was a representative Protestant, then Protestants must not be regarded as enemies, but as brothers. "For, bedad," said he to himself afterward, in the quietness of his room, "in spite of me traditions, me heart warmed towards the man when he spoke so feelingly of the blessed mother of Jesus. And when he prayed for us, the Catholic clergy, there was no bitter denunciation of us, but with trembling voice he prayed that we may know Christ experimentally as the only Saviour from sin, and begin to preach *the Gospel of the Grace of God* to our unhappy people."

CHAPTER IV.

INTERESTING DISCOVERIES.

THE Irish priesthood chiefly constitute two classes: the one political, the other spiritual. The first hopes for the restoration of the Pope's temporal sovereignty over all nations, and the consequent overthrow of Protestantism everywhere; the second class, greatly in the minority, endeavors to promote the spirituality and extension of the Church as Christ's kingdom, by faithful oversight of the flock and conscientious fulfilment of ecclesiastical duties. Father Murty was of this latter type. Beneath the vein of jocularity, which lay near the surface of his nature, were deeper and richer veins of piety and holy aspirations. Even his entrance into a Protestant place of worship was chiefly induced by the motive that he might hear something from this "Gospel of the Grace of God" which would help him to be a better priest and a more helpful pastor. The light for which he looked came, but more intense than he had expected, and, like the natural sun, almost blinded him

with its brilliancy. "Have I been like a rat in a hole, or a mole in the ground?" said the priest in soliloquy, "or has this blessed light only now visited the world? Be the powers, I'm dazed like an owl at noon, and will have to get to me room and think." Such were the holy father's musings at the close of the sermon. He had indeed made acquaintance with some features of that Gospel which had been hidden from him. But to resume: The preacher announced the fifth chapter of Romans as the portion of Scripture he intended to read and expound, having first offered the brief prayer that the Holy Spirit, the divine Author of Holy Scripture, would enlighten every understanding, and interpret His Word to every soul. Father Murty instinctively felt that these people fully believed in the divinity and infallibility of the Bible. "Maybe," thought he, "that is why they are so persistent in preaching it. Shure if it is God's holy Word I can't blame them to spend their money in sending it to the ends of the earth. And if it is God's holy Word, why should I and every priest of our Church warn our flock against it as if it were deadly poison? I suppose Luther's Bible *is* poison, but we don't want them to have even our own Douay with the *imprimatur* of the archbishop. The saints help me, I'm in a muddle."

Soon as the preacher began to read the chapter, the good woman sitting next to the priest handed him her Bible opened at the proper place. While listening to the exposition he observed that the margin of the book in his hand was peculiarly marked and covered with written notes, criticisms, and explanations. Lines of ink radiated from words underscored to words or texts of similar import. There were lines parallel, perpendicular, oblique, which connected the printed sentences with the written explanations. This oddly marked book puzzled the priest. He could not, just now, enquire what the lines meant. He rightly surmised that she was a diligent Bible student, and that this crisscross marking was neither whimsical nor mechanical. There was evident design and meaning in it all. "It reminds me," remarked he in a subdued whisper, "of Jim Scully's farm cut up with lanes, and stone walls running in every direction till you can scarcely see the little bits of fields and weeny gardens."

While the preacher was expounding, the priest was deciphering. He had observed the phrase in verse 1, "*peace with God*," underscored, and connected with verse 6, "Christ died for the ungodly." The word DIED was made emphatic by double lines, and connected

with "*atonement*" in verse 11. Opposite on the margin was written "reconciliation ; see R. V." The two capitals perplexed him, not knowing very much concerning the "Revised Version." Father Flynn was quick to perceive and hastily made this memorandum : —

"1. Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"2. Peace for the ungodly for whom Christ died."

"3. Peace the result of reconciliation with God."

"4. Reconciliation with God."

"5. Who are reconciled?"

"6. How is it effected?"

The latter queries were evidently for future consideration. So fully had Father Murty been occupied with these cogitations that he was startled by the congregation arising to sing the hymn announced. And this was their song which swelled in grand volume, thrilling him with its power : —

"From whence this fear and unbelief ?

If God, my God, hath put to grief

His spotless Son for me.

Can He, the righteous Judge of men,

Condemn me for that debt of sin,

Which, Lord, was charged on thee?

Complete atonement Thou hast made,
And to the utmost farthing paid
 Whate'er thy people owed;
How then can wrath on me take place,
Now standing in God's righteousness,
 And sprinkled by Thy blood?

If Thou hast my discharge procured,
And freely in my place endured
 The whole of wrath divine,
Payment God will not twice demand,
First at my bleeding Surety's hand
 And then again at mine.

Turn then, my soul, unto thy rest;
The merits of thy great High Priest
 Speak Peace and Liberty;
Trust in His efficacious blood,
Nor fear thy banishment from God,
 Since Jesus died for thee."

We have before intimated that the priest was in a very susceptible state of mind. Surely the Holy Spirit was graciously leading him to a full knowledge of salvation. This hymn drove the nail of truth deeper into his soul. A conviction stronger than human persuasion had taken hold upon him — the conviction that the sacrifice of Christ was wickedly nullified by the sacrifice of the mass. He had previously been aware of many wrongs and abuses committed in the name and for the sake of the Church,

but with intenser light breaking in upon his mind he began to perceive doctrinal errors, as well as moral evils, needing reform. How many thousands of conscientious Romanists in all ages have hoped to reform the Church while as yet not having the Rock of Salvation beneath their own feet. Until the sinner has been released from the just claims of God's righteous law through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, he can do little toward effecting the freedom of others. They must themselves withdraw from a false system before they can draw others to the true Saviour.

The sermon which followed the hymn last sung was a very plain unembellished presentation of "the old, old story," the glad tidings of salvation. There were no flights of fancy, no poetic effusions, no rhetorical flourishes. The preacher was too much in earnest. Souls to him were trembling on the edge of awful, irretrievable doom; why, then, should he sport with them or play the fool? Would he dare to distract their attention from the Cross of Christ in order to attract to himself by petty jugglery? No, the evangelist felt the gravity of the occasion; else how could he give account to God should any soul be lost through his flippancy or vanity? The message of salvation was de-

livered in terse Anglo-Saxon, the most powerful vehicle which an English speaker can possibly employ for the communication of thought to his hearers. The priest, who had studied the arts of the rhetorician, expected outbursts of impassioned appeal, strong denunciation and startling climax; instead, he heard bold, calm, earnest, intelligent language presenting the weightiest matters which can possibly occupy the human mind or fall from human lips. The preacher seemed surcharged with his theme; he was visibly affected during its delivery. While avoiding the rant of sensationalism he was far removed from the chilling frostiness of the æsthetic essayist. The text was selected from the chapter previously read. "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1).

"Peace with God," said the preacher, "is a privilege enjoyed only by those who have been reconciled to God through the death of His Son; who are now justified in the sight of God, standing in heaven's court of equity, not in the filthy rags of their own *imperfect* righteousness, but in the peerless robe of Christ's *perfect* righteousness. For this righteousness is unto all, and upon all them who by faith receive Christ. His all-sufficient merit is imputed to every soul trusting in Him alone for salvation.

“The previous chapters prove two great incontrovertible facts:—

“1. That no sinner is justified before God by self-righteousness; that is, by personal merit. 2. That all who appropriate Christ by faith are justly acquitted from every charge of guilt, because HE DIED for the ungodly, so that *who-soever* believeth on Him immediately receives the remission of sins. Thus absolution from sin is complete. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. There is, therefore, now no judgment for them that are in Christ. And much more, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. The justification of the sinner looking by faith to Christ only, who gave His life for ours, is an undoubted *fact*, according to the *infallible testimony* of the sacred Scriptures. And therefore having been justified we enter into peace with God. Peace has been purchased for us by the blood of the cross. We should, therefore, enter into the joyful assurance of it as our *present* possession. The peace of a tranquilized conscience is our inalienable right. It is consequent on the apprehension of the truth, that our controversy is ended with God, for Christ hath made reconciliation between God and us, so that we now have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

“Many emblems have been employed to illustrate the peaceful state of that soul which has found its rest in Christ. It has been represented as the still music of a holy soul; the calm sunset of a summer’s sabbath; the quiet, majestic flow of the broad and deep river. Peace is love reposing, love in the green pastures, love beside the still waters. It is the calm, after a storm. The sinner sees the frowning law now wear a smile, and stern justice beam with pleasure, the atoning sacrifice of Christ Jesus having satisfied every claim of law and paid every demand of justice. Friends,” continued the preacher, in earnest, tender tones, “peace with God has been made for us by our blessed Saviour; let us therefore now, to-day, at once, enter into its present enjoyment. This is our heritage, our unspeakable privilege.

‘A mind at perfect peace with God —

Oh! what a word is this:

A sinner reconciled through blood —

This, this indeed is peace.’”

“Beautiful, beautiful,” exclaimed the ardent priest, loud enough to be heard by those in his immediate neighborhood. He had been enchained a captive listener by the simple recital of that *old, old story* which possesses a charm

for the perturbed soul beyond all novelties, all philosophies, and all religions, whether ancient or modern. Father Flynn was making discoveries; other disclosures, perhaps, awaited him.



CHAPTER V.

TRY OR TRUST?

Two simple words characterize the experiences of all persons who are piously inclined: "Try" and "Trust." "Try" is of doubtful quantity; it implies incompleteness, dissatisfaction, discouragement. "Trust" is confidential, restful, assured. "Try" is cumbered with duties, observances, tasks attempted but never done. "Trust" rises into an atmosphere of faith, hope, love; good works follow as the train of cars is drawn by the powerful engine. "Try" is restless, feverish, moved or arrested by moods and feelings. "Trust" is peaceful, going out of self to God from whom cometh salvation and strength; for he who would obtain salvation must have his heart fixed, trusting in the Lord. The Bible, with its index-finger, ever points to Jesus, announcing, like the Baptist, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." It is by this testimony of the divine Word the Christian believer is persuaded. He heeds its

admonition, "Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength;" he has an experience of its assurance, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee" (Isaiah 26: 3, 4).

Father Flynn, like others awakened to a sense of spiritual need, resolved within himself that he would hereafter *try* to do better, both as a man and as a priest. He had not as yet learned the gospel secret of *trust*, for he had not yet known the Lord. How easy to trust in Him when He becomes known to the soul! "They that know thy Name shall put their trust in Thee;" that Name given among men whereby we are saved; the Name represented as a strong tower, into which the righteous enter for salvation. Now this faith of the heart in the Son of God who loved us, and gave Himself for us, *necessarily excludes faith in any other person or thing*. What a vast difference between the answer of Paul to the inquiry "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" and that given by every Roman Catholic priest. Paul promptly responded, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," but Father Flynn would have said, "We will give you a penance to do; repeat the seven penitential Psalms twice a day for a

month, or a litany to the blessed Virgin or to the saints once a day for a week, and come to me again, and I will say *ego te absolvo*¹ over you." The fact that he had frequently given this advice, not because it was a conviction felt in his own heart, but that it was part of his priestly training, recurred to his mind even while listening to the sermon. The thought overwhelmed him with a sense of fear that he had been misleading souls, and was not entirely free from their blood. Yet what could he have done? He must be faithful to the tenets of the Church; how dare he suggest his own opinions? What right had he to private judgment? The Church denied this right to all her children, of course, for their spiritual good (!). So he reasoned; nevertheless conscience was busy, and he felt troubled. He therefore set himself to listen more carefully and critically to the sermon.

The preacher went on: "Man's moral nature is distorted, his judgment perverted, his will rebellious. Sin, that spreading leprosy of the soul, cleaves to him; God's violated law hurls its curse at him; justice with drawn sword as the lawful avenger of blood pursues him. He looks around; but the world — neither its

¹ I absolve you.

religions nor its philosophies provide him with a refuge; he looks within and finds conscience awake with terror; he looks beneath and sees the yawning grave ready to receive his corruptible body and hell prepared to engulf his infected soul. He dares not look up to meet those eyes of flame which search into every hidden motive and secret thought. He strongly feels the unchallenged truth of the statement, 'There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.' Have you ever stood by the sea and watched the angry waves break upon the shore, flinging the loosened mire upon the beach? Such is the scriptural figure of man's sinful heart. 'The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.' If, then, the sinner is in rebellion, and his nature is corrupt, why does not the holy God, whose arm is everlasting strength, smite the world at a blow, and crush out of the universe this ungodly race? He purged the earth of old when all flesh had become corrupt. Why does he not arise again and shake terribly the earth? Oh! my hearers, this he will do in the great day of his vengeance: but, know this, that the longsuffering of God is salvation. He willet not the death of a sinner; he delayeth the day of execution, while calling sinners to repentance. Hear him

declare: 'For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil.'

"Oh, ye children of men, can this be really so? Can He, the great God, release the sinner from every charge of guilt, and remain faithful to righteousness and truth? Shall He sacrifice His holiness in order to save the guilty? Must He set aside every claim of law and justice when He offers free and full pardon to transgressors? Can he modify the rigor of the law, and bend its straight lines to accommodate the defaulter? If so, is He not in partnership with sin? How then can He uphold His glorious throne and government in righteousness?"

Father Flynn heaved a long pent-up sigh as this final question reached him. He had been listening with absorbing attention, and feared the preacher had gone beyond his depths in raising these bold questions; how shall he reply to them? The priest did not know that the simplest child of faith could answer them; that the quiet lady by his side had mastered them. His own ignorance was the sad result of Rome's false teaching; he had been deluded by her anti-scriptural doctrines of salvation. He still fixed his eyes on the evangelist, who continued:—

“What, then, is the ground of the sinner’s pardon and peace with God? We have no doubtful answer at hand. The enigma is solved. ‘Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ Justified? oh, wondrous fact! Justification is not only *accounting* just, but *proving* just or innocent. Yet no sinner is personally innocent or free from sin; he is proved just, however, through the law of substitution, and through union with his substitute. The Lord Jesus Christ is that Substitute. He, the Son of God, became the Son of Mary. Born of a woman He became Man. Upon him personally the law had no claims; for Him justice had no threats, yet He bore the law’s dread curse, and justice plunged her sword into His sinless heart. Now is fulfilled that word: ‘He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it.’ Jesus became the sinner’s Surety; therefore, wrote evangelical Isaiah, ‘He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was laid upon Him.’ And faithful Paul responds, ‘He was made a curse for us;’ ‘He became sin for us who knew no sin,’ ‘He loved me and gave Himself for me.’

“God’s holy violated law demanded life for

life, tooth for tooth, eye for eye. Jesus willingly yielded up His unforfeited life to the law in order to redeem our forfeited lives. Justice demanded payment of the sin-debt incurred by us, which debt our blessed Surety paid. Does justice still demand? Nay, not twice;

‘First at my Surety’s bleeding hand
And then again at mine’

‘God commendeth His love towards us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.’ Who, then, are those benefited by His death? Believers only. For ‘to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, *his faith is counted for righteousness.*’ ‘Hear this, ye heavens, and be astonished, O earth,’ that rebels against the majesty of heaven may become reconciled to God, being justified through the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ. The rebellion is now ended, the enmity in the believer’s heart is removed, the accuser is silenced, the law is magnified, justice is satisfied, truth is vindicated, and mercy is triumphant. ‘Mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.’ Pardon and peace are therefore the purchased heritages of the believing soul; pardon through the blood

of Christ, and peace with God. Yes, Christ made peace by His own blood, and now peace is preached to them that are afar off, and to them that are nigh.

“‘Have you made your peace with God?’ was the question asked by a clergyman of a dying parishioner. ‘No, sir,’ gasped the sick man, ‘but Christ made peace for me, and I am satisfied.’ Think of this, ye desponding ones who toil in vain, seeking to procure peace by holy deeds, religious duties, penance, mortifications, fasts, and vöws. He hath made peace by the blood of His Cross. Not thy works, but Christ’s; not thy merit, but His can entitle you to salvation. And ye who hope to purchase heaven with money hope in vain. Said Simon Peter to Simon Magus, ‘Thy money perish with thee, because thou thoughtest that the gift of God can be purchased with money.’ Oh, my friends! do not be deceived, I entreat you. Liberal donations to the church, dispensations, party zeal, sectarian loyalty, prayers, tears, relics, holy medals, beads, crosses, saints, angels, priests, or popes can never secure to you eternal life. Take the advice of the blessed Virgin who said of Jesus: ‘Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it.’ She cannot save you; *go then directly to Jesus; go to Him to-day.* Hear

His invitation — ‘Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.’

“In conclusion, beware of *false peace*. Many cry ‘Peace, peace, when there is no peace.’ Conscience may be lulled into a deceitful calm, but the great day of awakening is at hand. I pray you let not the devil delude you. Rend your heart and not your garment; and turn unto the Lord your God. He will have mercy upon you. He will abundantly pardon. Look to Christ immediately and look to Christ alone, for ‘none but Jesus, none but Jesus, can do helpless sinners good.’”



CHAPTER VI.

A CRISIS AT HAND.

AFTER the sermon the priest in an abstracted manner left the building, having unconsciously committed the blunder of pocketing the Bible belonging to that good motherly soul. Having discovered his mistake after he had reached his lodgings, he broke out into a tirade of abuse against himself thus: "There, now, you've done it, me fine fellow. A clergyman of the holy Catholic Church becoming a thief! She will say I stole her Bible — an heretical Bible too. Bedad, maybe I am a heretic myself — but anyway, I wish I was a good Christian. I think I'll resign an' emigrate. But, shure that's cowardly. No; if I get peace in me heart an' the pardon of me sins, I'll preach it at Turf Bog. Whew! think of me lord bishop coming after me with his threat of excommunication. Be the powers, here's her address on the fly-leaf." During the soliloquy the priest was examining the book in his hands. "I'll send it to her house to-morrow; meantime my lookin' at it won't

make it less. St. Jerome! See the marks and interlineations. In faith, a female commentator, as sure as I'm the born son of Timothy and Margaret Flynn — decent people, God rest their souls. Bedad, if the ould fox knew I held this book in me hand he'd excommunicate me in a jiffy. And then, me fine fellow, how would you enjoy being an outcast from the Church; a black sheep in the eyes of everybody. *Och hone!* I wonder what would become of me?"

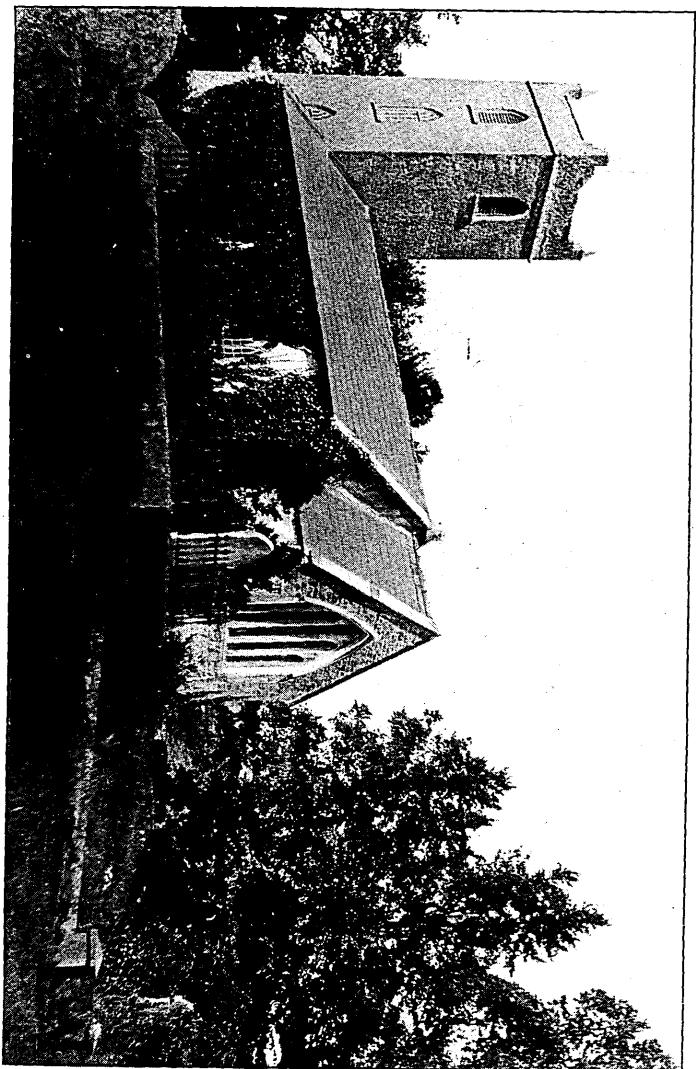
During this process of reasoning and questioning with himself, as his Irish tongue rattled on, the troubled man had been scanning some marginal notes, when suddenly his eye fell upon a paragraph heavily underlined. With a degree of curiosity he commenced to read, while with deep agitation he exclaimed: "My God and Saviour, are these words a temptation to entice me from the only true Church out of which there is no salvation for me immortal soul?" The blood mounted to his cheeks; his face became purple with the excitement produced by what he read, and in blind impulse he dashed the book against the wall. Then he sat before the fire to muse. But another fire had been kindled in Father Flynn's heart which he could not quench, and the words he had just read fanned the flames. He could not forget the

written explanation of the dreadful word which now attended him like a good angel, though to his clouded and excited brain haunted him like a spectre.

I subjoin the passage from John 9: 31-38: "Now we know that God heareth not sinners, but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, He could do nothing. They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? *And they cast him out.* Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him He said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is He that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him."

The words, "*and they cast him out,*" were underscored, while on the margin was written, "excommunicated him." This was the dread word which terrorized the priest.

I beg to remind my readers of Father Flynn's emotional nature. Like most of his fellow-countrymen he flushed with anger in a moment,



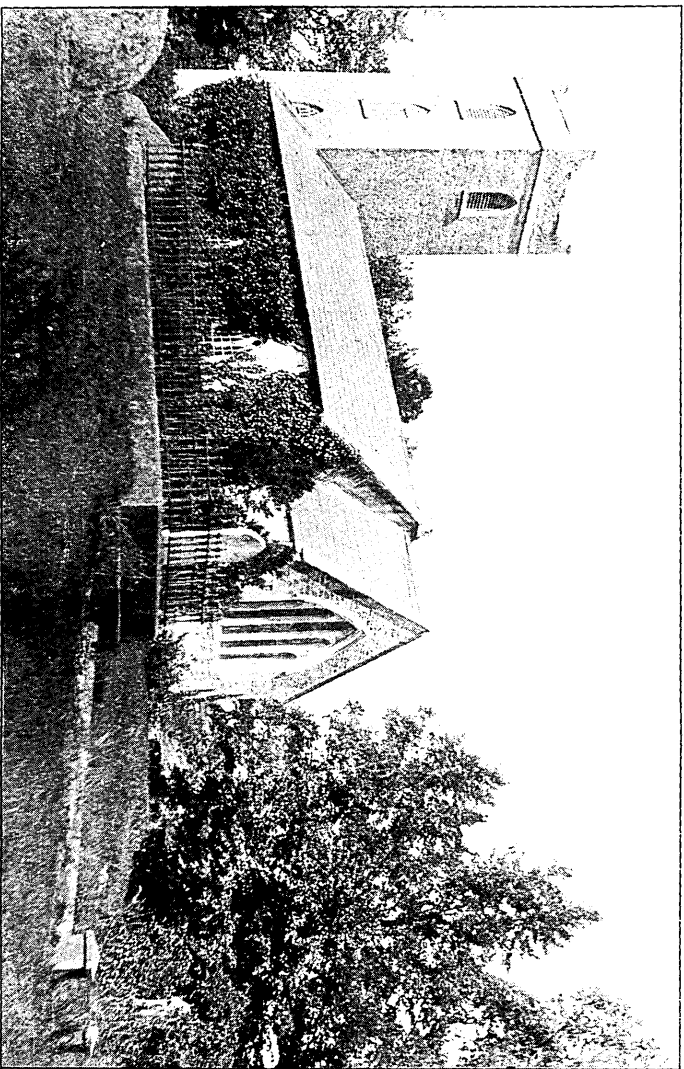
A South of Ireland Protestant Church. The church of my boyhood.—AUTHOR.

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A South of Ireland Protestant Church. The church of my boyhood.—ARTHUR.

and sometimes with little cause; the next moment he became penitent and peaceful. So now, after the raging storm came a period of calm. He stooped for the book, when he discovered two tracts which had dropped out from between the leaves.

The priest looked intently at the title of the first tract he had picked up. It startled him; he feared it, and yet wished to read it. But dare he do so? He would not allow to himself that he was in the least superstitious, yet the innocent paper in his hand produced a strange mental impression; an unknown dread of the future; an expectation of bad news — perhaps death; his own death? He called it “a presentiment.”¹ If he defied “the warning,” and read the tract, perhaps his doom was irrevocably sealed. But what that expected doom was he could not divine. The tract looked innocent enough, but its title alarmed him. Was he ready for its full meaning in his then present state of mind? He looked at it again and questioned, Would God preserve him from all evil if he read it? Had he not full freedom

¹ “The very tendency to superstition, so marked in Irish nature, arises from an instinctive dislike to the narrow limitations of common sense. It is characterized by a passionate yearning towards the vague, the mystic, the invisible, and the boundless infinite of the realms of imagination.” — *Ancient Legends of Ireland*.

from the fear of devils and the fear of man? shall he be the slave of what may prove only a mental hallucination? Such thoughts intruded themselves upon him. Suddenly like a frightened child he rushed to his door and locked it, then dropped on his knees and offered the first extemporaneous prayer of his life. His supplications were fervent, his petitions urgent. He besought God the Father of all to show him mercy for Christ's sake; to teach him the true gospel, — "the Gospel of the Grace of God," — to give him peace in his soul. And he prayed for courage to carry out his sense of right wherever the right would lead him.

After this outpouring of his heart to God he felt greatly comforted. Nor was he alarmed that he had offered no petition to the blessed Virgin, nor to any saint in the calendar. It was not that he had purposely omitted this former important duty, but the agony which gave birth to prayer could not take other than God as his helper — God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Soothed and strengthened he now took the tract and read it fearlessly to the end. That tract had a message for him; by its means the crisis was fully reached.

How wonderful are the dealings of God in the history of human souls! His ways are in-

deed past finding out. The results achieved within the heart of Father Flynn by the little silent messenger are in other cases reached by labored argument, diligent study, close reasoning, and generous reading of church history. His deeply rooted prejudices were pulled out like weeds when the ground is moistened after rain; his false ideas of sin, its punishment and pardon; his perverted views of God, pagan and blasphemous, vanished as the mists before the shining sun. The gospel came to him not in word only, but in power and in the Holy Ghost, as he entered into a deeper meaning of "The All-Cleansing Blood," of which the little tract so entitled was an exposition.

Soon as the priest finished the reading of this tract he gave vent to his feelings in a long low whistle, while two horns of a dilemma rose to view. "Be the powers," said he, "I'm in a nice fix. I dare not allow to meself that this tract is heretical in its teaching. I feel the truth of it beyond any question. I *know* it is gospel truth. But what'll become of me now? Can I stifle me conscience, dishonor me manhood, and cast away me self-respect by turning me back on the way of life which, like a path of silvery light, lies before me leading to the paradise of God? If I continue saying

masses, hearing confessions, imposing penance, and giving absolutions, which the Lord knows I have no power to give, I'll be worse than Judas selling me Saviour, for a few years in the priestly office. But if I should publicly hint the good news that 'the precious Blood of Christ' is sufficient to procure absolution for every penitent, there would be a ruction in the parish, and the whole Jesuit pack would hunt me out of house and home." Then, looking upward with clasped hands, the anxious man prayed, "Blessed Jesus, help me now in the hour of my perplexity ; befriend me in the hour of my great need. I want to do Thy will, strengthen me to obey and fulfil it. Amen."

The second tract lay on the table. He read the title: "THE ONLY INFALLIBLE GUIDE—THE BIBLE; THE ONLY INFALLIBLE TEACHER—THE HOLY GHOST." The reading of this tract proved an answer to his prayer, for he was further refreshed in soul and strengthened in the faith. A crisis in his life had been fully reached.



CHAPTER VII.

EMIGRATION: WHY AND WHEREFORE.

FATHER FLYNN spent the first hours of the morning in preparing the following letter, which he sent by special messenger with the Bible to its owner:—

DUBLIN, April 6.

TO MRS. HARRIET SOMERS:—

Madam,—I beg to apologize most sincerely for the blunder unconsciously committed by me in bringing your Bible from the place of worship which I left rather hurriedly last night. Common courtesy would have detained me long enough to express my thanks to you for your thoughtful kindness to an utter stranger, but, seized with a sudden impulse, I hastened from the building. The book, which I placed unthinkingly in my pocket, I discovered after reaching my room. Your address found on the fly-leaf enables me to return it. The fear of its permanent loss must have disturbed your mind, and as I now return the precious volume it is

with every apology for the awkward mistake made by me, and also with many thanks for your gracious kindnesses, which I have fully appreciated.

Madam, I am the stranger with whom you shared your books, and I deem it proper to inform you that the unintentional theft has produced surprising results in so short a space of time. Perhaps you will be additionally interested to learn that I am a priest of the Roman Catholic Church; though, perhaps, hereafter I shall be looked upon as a reprobate. Although hitherto a stranger to Protestant doctrines, and indeed having little knowledge of my Protestant neighbors, I regarded them as I had been taught from infancy, as altogether outside the pale of the Church. I had not known till now that Christianity is more than a creed, and Salvation greater than church membership. Indeed I am only beginning to see that my blind repudiation of Protestant doctrines cannot save me from the fires of Gehenna, nor my allegiance to the Catholic faith open to me the gates of Paradise. I wonder now why some good Christian did not seek to win my ignorant soul to grace.

But, madam, the sermon I heard last evening, the prayers which were so fervently rendered,

in addition to the annotations which I discovered in your Bible, and those portions of the book which I read in the solitude of my room, have all combined to produce within me a most radical and agreeable change. I feel like a man who had been semi-conscious through physical weakness once more returning to health and looking upon the world around him with open eyes and clarified intellect. The change within me is so rapid, it seems as yet a dream. Yet I know I have now tasted the refreshing waters of salvation ; I have heard the clarion ring of the trumpet calling me to action ; I have felt the thrill and rush of a new life within my soul with its overpowering emotions of hopeful desire. Therefore I thirst for a deeper draught from the wells of God ; my heart yearns for a mightier inflow of this novel and luxurious experience. Surely this is the result of my believing "the Gospel of the Grace of God." My soul sees through the prison-bars of a traditional religion the world of liberty beyond, and my faith is even now beholding these bars shattered by a mighty hand. Shall I become free indeed ? What the future has in store for me I cannot now determine ; but be it dark or light, be it cloud or sunshine, I fain would hasten onward on this path of life upon which my feet are even

now planted. I am in God's care; will he not guide me and help me? I humbly trust my soul to the Redeemer of mankind. The Saviour is now my All, my Bishop, my Pope, my God. O Jesus, never did a criminal more need pardon than I need it now. I look to Thy Cross, Thy Blood; yes, Thy Blood which cleanseth me from *all* sin.

Madam, forgive the length of this epistle. I write freely, as I am well persuaded from my observation of your pious behavior that you are a good and earnest Christian. I beg you, then, to intercede for me in your prayers. I want the intercession of such saints now. I give up praying to the dead; I covet the prayers of the living. Ecclesiastical difficulties may press upon my soul and severe trials await me. I feel their shadows haunt me. Pray God that He will keep me in grace that I may not lose the peace already enjoyed. I know you will not betray my confidence while I am as yet uncertain of my plans. I freely rely on your Christian discretion, and beg to subscribe myself, madam, your obedient and unworthy servant,

MURTAGH FLYNN.

Three days after the date of this letter the newspapers reported the accidental drowning of

Rev. Murtagh Flynn, P.P., of Turf Bog;—his small boat had been found floating bottom upwards a few hundred yards from the shore. But I can assure my readers that, even while the excited parishioners were dragging the lake for his body, the gentleman himself, very much alive, in the guise of a business man, was treading the deck of an Atlantic steamer plowing her way through Queenstown narrows and turning her prow towards the land of golden sunset.¹

Alas, indeed, is it so? Must he thus stealthily emigrate? Is there no safety for a Romish priest, if he choose to withdraw from the Church of his fathers? Can he not read the Word of God, and follow what he conceives to be a better way, and yet live in peace in the land of his nativity? Must he, a man of unimpeachable integrity, within whose heart throbs a passion for religious freedom, flee from his home like a fugitive worthy of death? Yes; there is freedom elsewhere, but *not as yet* in Ireland. Men who change their faith in other lands are tolerated, be the motives honorable or base, but in the very land which bitterly cries for liberty, her own children are intolerant of those who truly seek it. Father Flynn often felt his cheeks burn with the shame of mortified pride

¹ See Appendix.

during that voyage. He despised himself for acting the coward's part; he hated the system which employs the exquisite torments of an inquisition to degrade the most saintly characters suspected of independent thought in matters of faith and creed.

Can this indeed be the religion of Jesus? Hear Him rebuke the sectarian spirit of His chosen disciples who sought his approval on their misdirected zeal. "Master," say they, "we saw one casting out demons in Thy name, and we forbade him because he followeth not us." And thus did the gracious Lord answer them, "Forbid them not, for no man can do a miracle in my name, and speak lightly of me." How then does the Papal Church, drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus, represent His benignant reign?

We would accuse no Church falsely, but what is the testimony of history? When a Protestant is converted to the Romish faith the doors of welcome are thrown widely open to receive him, especially if the neophyte represent wealth or social position. They are received with honeyed words and honored with marked distinction. But when a Roman Catholic begs leave to pass outside the membership of his church, he is challenged, insulted, persecuted,

degraded. He is a traitor, a heretic, an apostate, a devil. He is cursed, vilified, excommunicated. And forth he goes, his character maligned, his name blasted, his life endangered. Is this fair play? Know, O my reader, that the Irish nature is generous, hospitable, ingenuous. Not from *her rustic sons* will any receive harm, until, *as servants of Rome*, they become excited with the wine of her fornications. The Italian hand has molded the Irish Catholic. The stately Apollo has become a drunken Bacchus; the virus of Roman putrescence has inoculated the fair Hibernia; the corruptions of the Papacy break out on the goodly seed of Erin: it is the mark of the Beast.

Father Flynn determined to follow the teachings of Christ and His Apostles. He was not a weak character, yet he shrank from avowing his convictions in the open light of day. Well he knew that no proper hearing would be given him; that an immediate recantation must be avowed, or an irrevocable vengeful excommunication be executed against him. He would not do the first; he feared the results of the second. While in the prime of manhood he cared not to rot neglected in some inquisitorial dungeon or monastic cell, "doing penance" for believing in Christ, so leave Ireland he would to seek freedom elsewhere.

Standing apart from the crowd of emigrants on the deck of the steamer he watched the green fields and rugged hills of his native land fade away beyond the range of vision, when, with tender accents of suppressed emotion, he gave utterance to the prayer born of a sigh, "GOD SAVE IRELAND!" How can he prevent the flowing of tears? He wept because he was human. After a while he sought his cabin, bathed his face, and returned to his isolated place on deck. With composed features he now fixed his eyes upon the western horizon as if seeking to decipher the problem of his future life. His eye is not dim, nor his natural force abated. His arm is strong, his heart brave; an upward glance fills him with a glad hope which reflects itself in the sunny smile, while his lips speak out the assuring confession: "O God, Thou art my God; strong is Thine arm to protect; infallible Thy word to guide. I know not what lies before me; I know not where I go; my purse is empty; my knowledge of business limited; but there is no future where Thou art not, and if I know not where I go, I know with Whom I go. Thy resources are like this ocean, boundless, illimitable; Thine agencies of supply like the stormy wind or gentle zephyr blowing from every quarter. My heart is glad, for Thou



"Father Flynn" on deck. "God save Ireland."

art my Hope; my soul shall know no widowhood, for Thou art her husband. I will rejoice in my poverty that I may feed out of Thy bountiful hand; I will lie humbly in the dust that I may kiss Thy feet."



CHAPTER VIII.

A DECIDEDLY MATERIALIZED SPIRIT.

WHEN the shadows of night had fallen upon the sea, the self-exiled priest walked amid the living freight who occupied the steerage, grouped in circles, chatting, singing, and discussing, to while away the hours. The dreadful *mal-de-mer* had not yet visited them; old Neptune was in a lazy mood and hastened not to demand tribute. The night was fine, the sea smooth, and none anticipated the waking from slumber of the unforgetful sea-god. Father Murty became interested in his new experiences. He explored and inspected.

What a motley group arrested his attention: sturdy Cornish miners; Welsh mountaineers; burly farmhands from English provinces; smiling Swedes; dark-skinned Italians, and last, but not least in numbers, a promiscuous crowd of Erin's buoyant sons and cheerful daughters. The emigrants were divided into little companies, drawn together by national and sympathetic affinities. Here is a German family:

Hans, with his big pipe, is detailing an exciting story to his *frau* about a relative who had made a fortune in the New World, while the tow-headed youngsters are huddled around the mother, listening to their corpulent sire grunt out his hopes and expectations of vast wealth. Leaning against the railing is a group of young Swedes who carry on their courtship in doubles, with rustic simplicity and unmasked affection. The Italians, who are few in number, smoke their Neapolitan cigars in silence; while from the various circles of Hibernians we hear the sharp sally, the native wit, the boisterous laughter. Naturally the priest gravitated towards his own people. He deeply felt for the old men and haggard women who were forced by stern necessity to leave their humble cabins and seek bread under other skies.

"Pity," said he, "they should not end their days in the place so dearly loved and made doubly sacred by the graves in the old churchyard. As for the young people," he added, "what could they do at home, especially in those congested cities, or unproductive districts where living is at best but a famishing existence? Therefore, 't is a good move for the young; they'll soon forget the troubles and trials which persistently stick to the ould sod.

The aldermen and mayors of great cities are made out of this kind of material. If the rascally Jesuits and their false religion don't spoil them by making them hostile to Americans and American institutions, I see before me, in blood, bone, and sinew, material for a great country of illimitable resources." His soliloquy was not heeded, for those nearest him were facing the other way, reaching forward with evident eagerness. A matronly woman was holding the listeners spellbound by the recital of a very thrilling tale. As she sat on some deck-gear, Father Flynn stood on tiptoe to get a sight of her face, if possible; all the more eager as he overheard the startling news:—

"Last Monday thin it happened, glory be to God! He was in Dublin for a few days and came home, but did n't officiate on Sunday, he not being well, an' havin', I've been tould, a great throuble on his mind. Monday morning Mike McCarthy saw him go to'rds the lake an' that's the last was seen of him alive. Mike says he kept lookin' on the ground wid his face as pale as a ghost."

"An' whisper, Peggy," asked a rapt listener, "did they find the corpse?"

"Divil a corpse," replied Peggy, "up to the time I left yesterday. God forgive me for that

same word, for he was kind to everybody; he would n't harm chick nor child."

"Well, it bates all," added an old boycotted farmer; "but I can't see how a consecrated priest could be drownid. It bates Banagher entirely."

"Maybe he's only dove down to see after things in Purgatory," broke in a young Mickie who had become skeptical on the existence of this theological limbo; "some of them people are hard to get out;" saying which, he gave the pretty girl by his side a squeeze which made her shriek; whereupon the older people harshly rebuked the jester for his blasphemy, one man calling him a "young villain," while a withered granny charged him with being a "turncoat souper."¹

Meanwhile Peggy informed each newcomer of Father Flynn's accidental drowning! she with her daughter Tilly having just come from the parish of Turf Bog. As she again enlarged on Mike McCarthy's description of the priest, who had the honored distinction of seeing him last alive, a sailor on duty walking past let fall the light of a ship's lantern full on Father

¹ A term of contempt given to those who withdraw from the Roman Catholic Church. Many poor people received charity in the form of soup in the years of famine. This was supposed to influence them towards Protestantism.

Flynn's countenance. At that instant Peggy's eyes were in the priest's direction, whose features had suddenly gleamed with awful distinctness. A wild scream startled the emigrants as the woman shrieked:—

“Oh! wirra, wirra, holy Mary, mother of God, 't was himself! Oh, oh! St. Joseph, St. Bridget, and all ye saints purtect me, for I've seen the face of the dead. Oh! wirra, wirra, his handsome face lookin' into me two eyes. Oh! good people all, did n't ye see him lookin' at me over Jim Downey's shoulder?” The terrified Jim instantly looked around, but the ghostly visitor had slipped away to the solitude of his own cabin. Peggy did not faint; nature had not cast her in so fine a mold, nor allowed her in the onward stages of physical development to lapse into delicacy. She had great vigor of mind and body, and occasionally became violently passionate. She now raved, tore her hair, became hysterical, beat her breast while her eyes danced wildly in her blanched and bloodless face, still praying incoherently and predicting with vehement language that they were all going to the bottom of the deep.

“What is it at all?” inquired a young woman, who rushed from her lover to the scene of confusion. “What ails the poor crayther?”

she asked, as she looked pityingly on the terrified Peggy, who ceased not to invoke the protection of God and the saints from the ghost of "the drownidid priest." The Irish emigrants, who had been listening to Peggy, were now seized with a panic of fear, and but few dared express the hope that the ghost of a holy father was sent as a good omen of a prosperous voyage.¹

"God be good to us all," said Jimmy McBride, as he gave his version of the story to a questioning group of fresh inquirers; "he was drownidid in a lake, an' he came up through the say. There must be a big tunnel under the world."

"Did you see him, Jimmy?" inquired Patsy Dineen.

"Faix, that I did," replied the lying Jimmy, who began to feel self-important in the eyes of his eager listeners, and in order to maintain his newly acquired fame gave free reins to his fevered fancy and Irish tongue. "You see," continued the imperturbable Jimmy, "the holy

¹"Ireland is a land of mists and mystic shadows; of cloud-wraiths on the purple mountains; of weird silences in the lonely hills, and fitful skies of deepest gloom alternating with gorgeous sunset splendors. All this fantastic caprice of an ever-varying atmosphere stirs the imagination, and makes the Irish people strangely sensitive to spiritual influences. They see visions and dream dreams, and are haunted at all times by an ever-present fear of the supernatural."—*Lady Wilde*.

father was a great angler [of which same holy father Jimmy had never heard before], an' bein' roand of the sport he went out with his rod to Lough Coppel. Well, he made a cast, when in a minute a bouncer of a salmon le'p'd for the tail fly. 'Bedad! he missed,' says the priest; 'but I'll get you yet, me boy,' says he, as he threw again as purty a cast as you ever saw over the swirl where me whopper struck the surface. 'Aha, maybe I'll get *you*,' says a voice out in the lake. The priest had n't a chance to cross himself, his two hands being on the rod, and he being that anxious to hook the salmon threw again, when, tare an' ages! the rod was whipped out of his hands, and he was dragged down into the pool, and that was the last seen of him till to-night."

"Jimmy, you're a big thief to belie God's minister who has the power over all evil an' could n't be harmed," protested Matt Doran. "Besides, Jimmy," added Matt, "how do you know what was said or what happened at Lough Coppel? Come, now, answer me that."

"Good for you, Matt," chimed in several, who, turning to Jimmy, demanded an explanation.

Cool as a cucumber, and ready as water to flow down hill, the unabashed Jimmy gravely

explained: "Boys, his ghost tould me the whole story there beyant the gangway awhile ago. I used to hear my father say that Lough Coppel was a short cut to glory, an' the blessid priest being ripe for heaven, the good people [the fairies] carried him to his long home."

The introduction of ghost-stories or fairy-tales is not difficult among Irish peasants. Any unusual occurrence in a community will revive the legends of that locality. A sudden death, a fright, funeral, or shipwreck will give occasion for the repetition of superstitious lore. Some of these are beautifully pathetic. Ghosts and priests were now discussed on deck, Tommy Sullivan capping the climax by reciting from memory the following story of "A WOMAN'S CURSE": —

"There was a woman of the island of Innis-Sark who was determined to take revenge on a man because he called her by an evil name. So she went to the Saints' Well, and kneeling down, she took some of the water and poured it on the ground in the name of the devil, saying, 'So may my enemy be poured out like water, and lie helpless on the earth!' Then she went round the well backwards on her knees, and at each station she cast a stone in the name of the devil, and said, 'So may the

curse fall on him, and the power of the devil crush him!’ After this she returned home.

“Now the next morning there was a stiff breeze, and some of the men were afraid to go out fishing; but others said they would try their luck, and amongst them was the man on whom the curse rested. But they had not gone far from land when the boat was capsized by a heavy squall. The fishermen, however, saved themselves by swimming to shore; all except the man on whom the curse rested, and he sank like lead to the bottom, and the waves covered him, and he was drowned.

“When the woman heard of the fate that had befallen her enemy, she ran to the beach and clapped her hands with joy and exulted. And as she stood there laughing with strange and horrid mirth, the corpse of the man she had cursed slowly rose up from the sea, and came drifting towards her till it lay almost at her very feet. On this she stooped down to feast her eyes on the sight of the dead man, when suddenly a storm of wind screamed past her and hurled her from the point of rock where she stood. And when the people ran in all haste to help, no trace of her body could be seen. The woman and the corpse of the man she had cursed disappeared together under the

waves, and were never seen again from that time forth."

The dread which this narrative produced on the listeners found vent in pious ejaculations. Even as they dispersed to their respective bunks they were still exclaiming, "Glory be to the Lord;" "The Lord preserve us from all harm;" "May the Mother of God keep us." More fervent still were the prayers offered throughout the night. Neptune was on board exacting tribute.



CHAPTER IX.

KLEEROS AND LAOS.

It has been remarked by thoughtful writers from age to age that the Irish peasantry are an anomalous race. Endowed with natural mental alertness they yet remain babes in knowledge; very reverent, but grossly superstitious; singularly credulous, yet absurdly suspicious; scrupulously conscientious, though curiously prejudiced against payment of just debts; peaceable as neighbors till stirred by passion, when revenge is sweet; pure in morals, with a fervid imagination and an unbridled tongue. How far all this discord of noble natures is a national characteristic, or how much of it is the outcome of Rome's doctrines and policies which for centuries have inoculated the Irish race, is a question I leave to the philosopher and the moralist. But this much we add, that while Rome ostensibly favors education through her schools, she perverts and stultifies the intellect through her priests. The Bible which is for all men is either forbidden or mistaught. It is not the daily

companion of the people; their way is blocked to this reservoir of knowledge. Like the Pharisees of old, the Pope's agents lock this door of knowledge; they will not enter themselves, and those who would they hinder. A notable illustration of Rome's antagonism to the Holy Scriptures has been the recent decision to place Lamsare's beautiful French translation upon the Index Expurgatorius, although having the approval of that astute Pope, Leo XIII. We rejoice, however, that notwithstanding Jesuitical watchfulness, thousands of the Irish people are now reading the Word of God for themselves.

But to resume. While the emigrants were excitedly discussing their ghostly visitor, Bishop O'Dowd sat in his library, with face paler than usual, his thin lips compressed, while his piercing black eyes flashed with rage. He was evidently laboring under deep excitement. The cause of it lay before him—a letter, bearing the postmark “Queenstown.” The bishop took the offending missive in his trembling hand, and with the brief prefatory remark: “The black-hearted Protestant devil,” he read it again.

TO THE RIGHT REV. BISHOP O'DOWD:—

My Lord Bishop,—Before leaving the land of my fathers it is due to you that I should ap-

prise you of my departure from Turf Bog, in order that you may have the earliest opportunity of making suitable provision for the supply of the parish where I served under your jurisdiction during the past six years, and which I now resign into your hands. My resignation in this manner may appear in your eyes, and in the eyes of the world, hasty, dishonorable, and cowardly, but I am only too well acquainted with the policy of the Church which perverts justice in dealing with those of her priests who can no longer conscientiously minister at her altar. While ignorant of "the Gospel of the Grace of God" I served her interests as one of her true sons; with opened eyes and better understanding of her damnable doctrines and corrupt practices I could no longer continue a deceiver of her people. I did not immediately apprise you of the great mental and spiritual change which I have recently experienced, as I feared your anger and dreaded your power, nor will I breathe the air of freedom until the wide ocean rolls between us.

During the past few years I could not understand why a professedly pure Church should maintain so tricky an ecclesiastic as yourself who winks at the sins of many of her priests, of which you are so well aware. Religion I re-

garded from childhood as a sacred thing, making its followers pure in heart and holy in life. It often goaded me nigh to madness, and drove me to the verge of despair, to observe the scheming, lying, dishonesty, and immorality practised by leading ecclesiastics in the name of the Church. How often have I heard you say that you hated Protestants for the glory of God. Were I not an Irishman I would possibly have become an infidel. But happily there is in our nature a reverence for holy things and a deeply rooted faith in the supernatural. To believe unquestioningly, to trust implicitly, is characteristic of our race. Only when our nature is drugged by false creeds and insincere leaders, do we, in weak moments, lose our mental balance. It is then we are exposed to the subtle influences of skepticism, which sears the conscience while it perverts the intellect and corrupts the affections. Mercifully has God preserved me from this hell on earth by permitting me to hear and believe the simple gospel of Jesus Christ. I now read the Bible; I believe its inspired statements, accept its gracious invitations, and trust implicitly in its assuring promises. I must believe that Christ, my divine Lord, is an all-sufficient Saviour. If so, is it not blasphemy to belittle His saving power in seek-

ing the mediation of the Virgin or the intercession of the saints? The Blood of the adorable Redeemer is now my plea; His cross is my glory; His absolution is my salvation. I wish to follow Him fully; to be free from every influence which would prevent me from the study of the Bible; to guard my conscience from falsehood and my life from insincerity. *You* know I could not be a sincere follower of Christ while a priest of Rome; *you*, on knowing my purpose to give God's Word to the people, would be the first to weave a net around my feet from which I could not escape; every Jesuit agent, under your instructions would hound me to death. I own I have neither the grace nor the devotion of a martyr, but though I flee like a fugitive, I have done violence to no man nor taken aught belonging to others. The chapel, rectory, and other property of the Church will be found duly cared for; my housekeeper will resign the keys to your messenger.

Finally and frankly, I can hardly expect *you* to think of me *with charity*. The Papal system finds in you its willing tool, yet I beg of you to remember that there are men who have convictions of right and duty who are neither traitors to religion nor blasphemers against God. May the blessed Holy Spirit who has given me an

enlarged vision of God's boundless mercy in Jesus Christ enlighten your heart that you may seek His grace now and enjoy His glory hereafter, is the earnest prayer of your servant, for Christ's sake,

MURTAGH FLYNN.

This extraordinary document had already filled the irritable bishop with rage. After this second reading he flung it on the table, hissing through his teeth with passionate emphasis the spiteful malediction, "The black-hearted Protestant devil!"

The intense hate which filled the heart of O'Dowd when he discovered that one of his own priests had access to the Bible can hardly be understood by persons unacquainted with Catholic policy.

The late Dr. Doyle, one of the most learned of the Romish hierarchy in Ireland, wrote of a man who had received a Bible from a lady: "When the night closed in and all danger of detection was removed, he, lest he should be infected with heresy inhaled from the Protestant Bible during his sleep, took it with a tongs, for he would not defile his touch with it, and buried it in a grave he had prepared in the garden." The doctor then adds: "I, who am thus

a very Bible-man, do admire the orthodoxy of this Kildare peasant; nay, I admire it greatly, and should I happen to meet him I shall reward him for his zeal." Another servant of Rome said in an address against the Bible Society: "Therefore I conclude that the indiscriminate perusal of the Bible is inconsistent with the sanctity of the Church, and, as I have in another part of my discourse suggested, *it opens the flood-gates to immorality and vice*. Further, this principle leaves men *to die in infidelity*." But the Bible cannot be chained. Even now it marches through Ireland and other priest-ridden countries victorious in its might. Shall not Irish priests in greater numbers become free men through its hallowed teaching? We await the advent of that hour when Ireland's sons and daughters will forsake their childish superstitions, enlightened and ennobled by the glorious gospel of the blessed God.

Having renounced Popery, Father Flynn abjured his priestly office. He wished now to fall back a *layman* into the privacy of unofficial life. He had not known at this time that the classification of Christians into *clergy* and *laity* was anti-scriptural. The Bible teaches the co-equality of all believers: all are brethren in Christ; all are fellow-heirs of salvation; all

belong to the royal priesthood, and all are equally entitled to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God and render service in the gospel to man. But all are not alike gifted to teach or preach; for some by natural and spiritual qualification are pastors; others evangelists; still others helps, governments, teachers, and interpreters of tongues. To the Church there has been given a diversified ministry for her extension and edification. The only place in the New Testament where the word clergy is found is in 1 Peter 5: 3: "Neither as being lords over God's heritage [clergy from *Kleeros*, lot or allotment], but being ensamples to the flock." The flock, commonly called the laity, are really *the clergy*, over whom the elders, or official brethren who are responsible for the oversight of the assembly, should not domineer. The context teaches that the elders must set an example to the flock, ruling in the fear of the Lord, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. The shepherds ought to care for the flock with affectionate regard, and not rule them with fear. The Ecclesia, which comprises only regenerated persons, is a select company—a heritage, or lot, separated from the world by the dividing line of spiritual birthright. But when the pro-

fessing Church grasped at worldly enthronement, those who were chosen to administer her affairs began to separate themselves from their fellow-Christians of less gift and more private capacity. Then did they arrogate to themselves the distinction of clergy by assuming that they only were the special *Kleeros*, or heritage, while the others were *laos*, the people. From the supposed sanctity which belonged to the clerical office a middle wall of partition was gradually built between these two classes. Soon after the rise of this schism there followed the introduction of badges, robes, and regalia whereby the clergy might be publicly recognized and duly honored. Hypocrisy was further engendered by the adoption of a seeming sanctity which enveloped them in its mystic atmosphere. Alas! too often this saintliness consisted only of cloth and appearance. Robes covered rottenness; ghostly countenances masked carnal lives; sanctimoniousness was the whitewash on the moral sepulchre, the paint and powder over the leprosy of vice.

But Father Murty, not understanding his relation to "the royal priesthood," renounced his official priesthood with no small degree of mental conflict. He knew as a matter of course the sentence of his excommunication

would have been speedily published from every Roman altar throughout Bishop O'Dowd's diocese. By necessity therefore, as well as by choice, he takes rank as a layman. Therefore, also, he must look, live, dress, and act in laity fashion. And so, in consonance with his repudiation of the priestly office, we also drop the priestly title and know him henceforth as *Mr.* Murtagh Flynn.



CHAPTER X.

CAST DOWN, BUT NOT DESTROYED.

MR. MURTAGH FLYNN had provided himself with an ordinary business suit which set off his rotund form in good shape. He had seriously pondered the question of remaining a shaveling or becoming a bearded pard. On this he decided by a sort of compromise in the adoption of a mustache. The ship's barber laid out the ground, and the patch left untouched by the razor, being thickly seeded, sprouted rankly; his appearance, therefore, on arrival at port was pugnacious. The mustache was harsh, stubby, rowdyish, and only on close view could the playful mouth and kindly eye be observed which advertised his genial and honest nature.

Murtagh lost no time in idle dreaming. The third day after his arrival found him seeking employment. He entered a clothing store, when a person of Jewish aspect with an eye for business saluted him.

“Vell, you vants a shuit?”

"No, I want a situation."

"Oh, dot's it; vell! Misdher Schlopgoods," addressing the senior partner, "you wants dish man mit de board?"

Mr. Schlopgoods, coming forward, offered Murtagh "dhree dollar a veek to valk de board mit de streets." After full explanation from Messrs. Schlopgoods and Schoddy, our friend refused their offer with hot indignation, not hesitating to call them a pair of Judases. He had not acquired sufficient intercourse with the business world to convince him that the Gentile firm of Cheathem and Trickee, across the street, was not any less scrupulous in withholding lawful wage from a hard-pushed breadwinner.

Later on Murtagh read this notice on the window of a restaurant, "First-class waiter wanted." This, thought he, is a profession easy to acquire.

"You a waither?" asked the proprietor after Mr. Flynn had applied for the situation. "Where was ye last?"

"At Turf Bog, in Ireland."

"Was ye a waither there?"

"No."

"Fhwat was ye?"

Murtagh had not foreseen the possibility of such a question, but when this low-browed fel-

low-countryman waited a reply he blurted out, while the blood mounted to his face, "A Roman Catholic priest."

"An' have ye turned Prodishtent?" was the next query, asked with a scowl.

"I don't know *to* what I've turned, but I have turned *away from* the Catholic Church."

He would gladly have explained why, in order that he might preach the Gospel of the Grace of God to the ignorant Irishman before him, but the bigoted boor sprang upon him with rage and expelled him from the saloon. I will not outrage my readers' sense of propriety by recording the curses which were hurled at our friend, who was denounced as "a villainous traitor av a turncoat; a black souper who sold his sowl to the divil." Murtagh curbed his Irish temper with steady will; he had now some knowledge of the grace of Jesus Christ which always proves sufficient in every hour of temptation, and with remarkable composure philosophized thus: "Bedad, it's in Cork I am, and not in America at all. At least I'm sure that ignorant Hottentot is a Corkonian by his brogue. I have heard that the Irish rule New York, and I suppose this Roman clown is one of the rulers."

For many days Murtagh paced the streets

offering his services but finding no permanent position. Roman Catholic employers summarily dismissed him on discovering his antecedents; some through innate hatred, others more liberally minded, but through fear of an ecclesiastical boycott, notified him that they no longer needed him. Protestant employers did not retain him on account of his limited business experience.¹ He was not a profitable man to them; cash profits, not philanthropy, was their business policy. In a certain store he recognized the bland features of a gentleman who had passed the contribution box in a wealthy up-town church where he visited one Sunday. He had observed him after the service roll away in grand style with his family, coachman, and valet. He knew him again by his patronizing smile and porcelain teeth. "Bedad, he

¹ "This class of men is very helpless in worldly matters. Their lives and training have all been directed to one specific purpose. Often their studies have been also limited and directed to this one end. While they may be fine metaphysicians and deeply versed in scholastic philosophy, they may be as ignorant as Arabs of the elements of arithmetic or bookkeeping. Men of delicate sensitiveness of character, they shrink from contact with the *ignobile vulgus* that crowd the paths of trade and commerce. They are leading a gentleman's life now; why should they, for what may be a mere intellectual phantasm, sacrifice that living, forfeit forever the love and respect of their friends, and step down and out into the wide, bustling, busy world? It is thus they reason; and the very anticipation of possible misfortune serves as the strongest tie to bind them to their slavery."

looks angelic; I'll try him," said Murtagh. And try him he did, but to no purpose. Mr. Sweetword was exact in his selection of salesmen; he acted on *preenceple*. It was an age of universal speculation; he never employed any person without proper credentials. He was very sorry indeed, but it was risky to employ strangers, and he *never took risks*. That was another of his *preenceples*. He handed Murtagh a book. "A leetle work of his own, elucidating some important business *preenceples*; a *leetirary* effort prompted only by *pheelanthropic* motives." He hoped the business hints would be of value to him. "Good day, sir, good day;" and he smilingly bowed the hungry, weary, lonely, disappointed man out of the store.

The book certainly aimed high, flaunting the title:—

INDUSTRY BASED ON MORAL PRINCIPLES;

OR,

THE OBSERVANCE OF CERTAIN BUSINESS LAWS

MORALLY ELEVATING.

BY

A NEW YORK MERCHANT.

After a perusal of its contents Murtagh characteristically remarked: "Well, now, how cleverly stupid. It outrivals Con Curley's donkey

who refused good oats for thistles. This seraphic merchant has got a bald head outside and inside. An Irish *buccough*¹ has more brains under his *caubeen*.² Well, Murtagh, if you lose a few more meals you'll not have the spirit of Jack Shea, who was frightened into a fever by the mewling of a kitten after night-fall."

It is hard to be a philosopher when hunger loudly demands attention, yet history relates deeds of heroism performed under most discouraging circumstances. History also informs us that saintship has triumphed where philosophy had failed. Mr. Flynn had reason now to look beyond the consolations of philosophy. His trials were severe ; he had no friendly counselor to advise him ; no congenial friend to cheer him. His lodging was common, his fare meagre, his clothing insufficient, his shoes broken. For it came to pass that he had become personally acquainted with the sign of the "Three Balls," where he pawned his outside covering for the means wherewith to procure inside nourishment. Like the children of Israel, this honest soul experienced bitter suffering, but unlike them no murmur fell from his lips. More than once this ancient Irish charm

¹ Beggar.

² Old hat.

for securing plenty of money occurred to his mind: "Kill a black cock and go to the meeting of three cross-roads where a murderer is buried. Throw the dead bird over your left shoulder then and there after nightfall, in the name of the devil, holding a piece of money in your hand all the while. And ever after, no matter what you spend, you will find the same piece of money undiminished in your pocket."

"Be the powers," added Murtagh, as this charm haunted the chambers of his memory, "I have n't the bird; I don't know such a grave; I prefer to resist the devil than to invoke his aid, and I have n't the piece of money. This charm, like the religion of Rome, has too many impossible conditions. But I've got a better charm, thank God! and being in extreme need I'll make use of it." He then opened the Bible and read from Isaiah 43: 1-4: —

But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called *thee* by thy name; thou *art* mine. When thou passeth through the waters I *will be* with thee; and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee; For I *am* the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour; I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.

Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable and I have loved thee.

He also read from the sixth chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew from the twenty-fourth verse to the end:—

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: they sōw not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, *shall* he not much more *clothe* you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye need all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take, therefore, no thought for the

morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

The effect produced within his soul by these promises was electrical. He was lifted to the third heaven of exultation. Whereupon he broke out: "Murtagh, me honey, are ye listening to me? With such words from your heavenly Father and your blessed Saviour, will you ever doubt again? And what business had you to run away from your own country and people, eh? Why did n't you remain and face the whole pack of Jesuits, and tell the good tidings of salvation to your poor blind parishioners? Maybe God is allowing me to suffer for my cowardice, or He may be teaching me the great things of His providence and grace that I may be better prepared to do His will." He soon fell into a reverie; his dreamy eyes were not fixed on any material object, while in mental vision he saw himself again at Turf Bog, preaching the precious gospel of Christ to his people, whose hearts had been mysteriously prepared for its reception. There, too, he saw his mother, with her earnest face and lips moving in prayer for their conversion to Jesus Christ. The vision changed, for he next saw the dark, scowling face of Bishop O'Dowd, piercing him through with

his wicked eye, while behind this heretic-hunter stood an assassin preparing to take his life. With a slight shudder Murtagh awoke from his reverie, looked around his room, repeating aloud, "When thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."



CHAPTER XI.

PERPLEXED, BUT NOT IN DESPAIR.

SOON after his arrival in New York Mr. Flynn inquired for a Protestant place of worship. He was directed to a church on one of the great avenues which leads from the business parts of the city to the beautiful, far-famed Central Park. The morning was bright, the air refreshing, the street wide, clean, and quiet. Traffic had ceased, and only the carriages of wealthy churchgoers rolled along the concreted boulevard. Mr. Flynn enjoyed his freedom from the irksome responsibilities of a Papal priest. As a simple Christian he offered unto God the acceptable sacrifice of praise. This heart-worship needed neither picture nor image to aid devotion; it was not necessary that he enter spired church or vaulted cathedral to worship God with acceptance. Neither Jerusalem nor Mount Gerizim, neither lonely cloister nor consecrated chapel, is holy ground. Nevertheless it is an instinct of regenerate souls to assemble themselves together in the name of Jesus for united public

worship, prayer, and godly edification. Without analyzing his reasons for so doing, Murtagh felt it right to seek out some Christian church where the Bible would be honored and its doctrines taught without the admixture of Rome's fallacious errors. He knew not, as yet, that many damnable heresies had found advocates among Protestants; that tenets more dangerous than papistical traditions were openly preached by men who denied the Lord that bought them. Papal preachers never repudiate the divinity of Jesus; indeed, they gladly ascribe to Him His true and proper deity, even while robbing Him of His rightful title as absolute and only Saviour. In paintings and statuary they represent Him either as a helpless babe in the arms of Madonna, or a dying Man on the cross. They have practically ceased to know the power of His resurrection. But there are professedly Protestant teachers of a school absolutely profane, to whom the Bible is only a human philosophy and Christ a humane reformer. Others in theory accept the supernatural element both in the Bible and in Jesus, but degrade the spirituality of His teachings, and the object of His advent, into a religion of culture. This is their potential agency for the elevation and purification of the world which lieth in wickedness! These

preachers regard the moral teachings of the Bible as an *eau de cologne* which sweetens the foul drainage of moral corruption and makes the world respectable and Christian. This delusion has many votaries who do not perceive its logical consequences. It denies our Lord's legislation for His own kingdom, and mocks His protest against all reformatory measures as a qualification for that kingdom. It was to a refined, respectable, cultured professor of religion Jesus declared: "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

Mr. Flynn, unfortunately, entered a church where regeneration was not preached and where its very necessity was denied. Wealthy sinners had employed a fashionable preacher whose mild platitudes fell soothingly upon sensitive ears and seared consciences. What a thunderstorm John the Baptist's sermon would prove to such a congregation, "Repent, repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" What an earthquake shock would his question produce, "Ye serpents, ye brood of vipers, who hath warned you to escape the damnation of hell?" Murtagh naturally expected in a Protestant church a simple, spiritual service, such as he had witnessed in Dublin, with the delicate courtesies born of real religion, such as Mrs.

Somers had shown him. But in these two particulars he suffered disappointment. Novice though he was, he instinctively felt the incongruity of his position. Self-admiration, not worship, was the incense which arose from each devotee. Murtagh fancied himself in some magnificent grotto whose scintillating stalactites dimly reflected each rainbow color. He admired the costly architecture, but felt chilled to the marrow. The singing was utterly unintelligible, the prayers fell from icy lips, while the sermon was a fulsome adulation of a humanitarian book, with criticisms on the elevating influence of art in general and philosophical fiction in particular. The young convert sighed heavily over his misfortune; he came for bread and was given a stone. Oh, how he missed the precious Gospel of God's grace to sinners! He feared the fount of devotion would freeze within him. He felt condemned for his presence in this church, and though not knowing why, somehow, somewhere, his spiritual nature was outraged by this travesty on spiritual religion. Being an ardent worshiper, he had deep convictions that the living Father should be worshiped with the whole heart. He questioned within himself whether he could train his religious nature to appreciate this dismal, unsatis-

fyng Christianity. How can he petrify the emotions of his soul? Can he ever reach that standard of piety where he could complacently enjoy the outrageous performances of this irreverent choir?

Having reached his room in a state of mental commotion, he turned to his Bible for consolation. He had frequently proved its power to instruct and comfort. He now read from John's Gospel, twentieth chapter. With great force the words of the thirteenth verse impressed him. "The Lord forgive me," said he, "for being so uncharitable, but I fear this is true of the gilded sepulchre beyond: 'They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.' Never once did the preacher mention the precious Name of the world's Redeemer. I formerly believed in miracles. Now I've witnessed one: a Protestant clergyman performing divine service with Christ left out." Murtagh was deeply affected as he pondered on this inexcusable omission. But he found relief in prayer. He prayed for the preacher, for the congregation, and for the choir, whose unbecoming antics in the sanctuary had shocked him; he prayed also for himself, long and earnestly, that his heart might be kept warm with the love of Christ and that he might not

lose the peace of the gospel. He arose from his knees comforted ; the glowing atmosphere of communion with God rekindled the fire of devotion within him ; he had a new experience henceforth to warn him that churches as well as individuals may retain the form of godliness while lacking its power.

The Sunday following Murtagh entered unknowingly a ritualistic church. With a puzzled expression of countenance he inquired if this was a Protestant place of worship. His wonder did not cease when informed that it was. Shrewdly guessing that while Protestant in name it was essentially Papal, he left the place muttering, "I had enough of that fandango, only not so stylish. Bedad, it takes a mint of money to keep those priests in such slashing gowns. But didn't they whine. I've heard of that holy tone used by bigwigs belonging to the English Ritualists. The dear help us, but it's the queer fashion ; it reminds me of Bill O'Halloran's mule when singing to his companion."

CHAPTER XII.

PLEASING DISCOVERIES.

OUR friend had now made the acquaintance of several churches. Wherever the Word of God was faithfully expounded, he rejoiced as one finding great spoil. But the shabbiness of his appearance made him shrink from contact with well-dressed people. Even, in his judgment, the churches in which he enjoyed the services were too gorgeous for the disciples of Jesus. Having spent a Sunday in the seclusion of his room he started for a walk in the evening where gas and electricity lighted up the streets. Soon he faced a bulletin-board announcing a meeting in the adjoining hall, to which *Roman Catholics* were *specially invited*. The meeting would be addressed by *several converted priests*. Himself now, thank God! a converted priest, he re-read the advertisement more than once with considerable emotional excitement. Seeing crowds of people ascending the stairway, Murtagh joined them. He entered a spacious hall already filled with a large congregation, most

respectable in appearance and demeanor. Many of them were evidently Irish Catholics. On the platform were seated several gentlemen of clerical appearance. The leader, a man of refined classic features, with high forehead and full rich brown beard, wearing glasses, commenced the services by announcing the well-known hymn,

“Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly.”

He made a few comments on this grand old evangelical rendition, especially on the lines:—

“Thou, O Christ, art all I want,
More than all in Thee I find.”

“Where,” said he, “is there room for Mary, or Joseph, or Leo XIII, if we find all our salvation and all our desire in Jesus?” To which Murtagh audibly responded, “Hear, hear!” much to the surprise and amusement of the audience. The opening prayer fell soothingly upon our friend’s ear, coming as a breath of life upon his soul.

The chairman next introduced Father D——, who briefly narrated his experiences. He had tested the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church by a careful comparison with Scripture

and church history. "Not one of them," said he, "could be supported by the Word of God." Father D—— made a proper and important distinction between *formal* and *vital* Christianity. "You may," he continued, "remain a Romanist or become a Protestant and never enter heaven. None but sinners cleansed through the Blood of the Lord Jesus, who are saved by Grace alone, can enter there." His declaration so fully accorded with Murtagh's own experience that the irrepressible man audibly responded, "Right you are, me honey!"

Father E—— was next introduced to the audience. He was Murtagh's veritable counterpart, looking like a twin-brother — rotund, pleasant-faced, emotional, determined. In a masterly manner he described and denounced the Confessional. It was while hearing the sad confession of a penitent he was first startled with the thought that, as a professed servant of the great God, he had no adequate remedy to assuage the sorrows of a broken heart or heal this wounded spirit. He had prayed with an honest purpose that God would teach him His way. How wonderfully the Holy Spirit works in the human heart! How accurate are the words of Jesus? "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." Father

E—— was led by a different path from others to the Cross of Christ, but there, he too, lost his load of sin, for he now trusted only in Christ for salvation, who bore his sins in His own body on the tree. His address, which was chaste, scholarly, and deeply earnest, made a visible impression on the audience. Murtagh's face was bathed in tears.

Father O——, the chairman, next reviewed his own life, dwelling especially on his consideration for his relatives when entering upon this new path of discipleship. His remarks touched Murtagh on a tender spot; he thought of his sorrowing parents who were yet unaware of their son's apostasy! The service having ended, Father O—— called upon the audience to come forward and greet these servants of Christ who had left all to follow the Master. Murtagh seized upon this opportunity of introducing himself, whereupon the ex-priest Father O—— received him affectionately. He inquired into his circumstances; whether he had friends or found a home in the city; to all of which, and many more like questions, Murtagh replied honestly and manfully. Father O—— took the weary man to his home, where he was bidden sweet welcome for Christ's sake. When presented to Father O——'s queenly wife, she

gave him the tender welcome of a warm Christian Irish heart. During the hours which followed he seemed like a man enjoying a delightful dream with the fear haunting him that it was only a dream, soon to melt away. But the generous supper which Mrs. O—— spread for her husband and their guest was no dream; the Christian conversation around the table was no dream; the simple prayer mingled with thanksgiving offered by Father O—— before retiring was no dream; the clean, sweet bedroom, the night-robe; the delicate attentions shown the weary man who hungered for Christian friendship and fellowship, were too glorious a reality to permit immediate sleep. He indulged in his present joys and praised God for this open door of hope. It was some time before sweet oblivion stilled the excited brain, some time before the slumber of the righteous, like a celestial visitor, hushed every emotion of exquisite pleasure into the peacefulness of sleep's tranquillity.

For hours during the following morning Mr. Flynn gave himself to wondering. He heard from Father O—— of several priests who had recently fled from Leo to Jesus; how that many of them had been fed, sheltered, and counseled by Father and Mrs. O—— until suitable em-

ployment was found for them ; he noticed the interest this loving wife took in the plans and hopes of her husband, who had started a Mission for the evangelization of Roman catholics, and also where conscientious priests who became dissatisfied with catholicism *would find a temporary home*. He heard with additional wonder that in New York and its vicinity several hundreds of Roman catholics were converted from idols to serve the living and true God; that a great movement was going on among them throughout the country, and that priests and people were inquiring the way of salvation. "Yes," broke in Mrs. O——, "and Jesus saved you, Mr. Flynn, that you might be His witness." Her eyes shone with an intelligent light, her face beamed with hope, and her decidedly earnest manner held Murtagh a deeply interested listener as she went on: "You are young and strong; you have ability and experience; you have felt the galling yoke of Rome, and tasted the joy of spiritual freedom. There are thousands of our countrymen waiting for the opportunity, and you must coöperate with my good husband in preaching to the Irish Catholics the Gospel of God's grace."

Murtagh observed in the illustration before

him the blessedness of God's purpose, that man should have a helpmeet. And although he had not previously studied the question of celibacy in the light of Scripture, he instinctively felt how superior is the man, like the priests of old, who has a godly wife as friend and counselor, to the celibate who is not so by personal choice, but made so by the severe, unnatural, and iniquitous system which claims Peter, a married Apostle of the Lord, as its founder, yet binds its priests, the professed successors of Peter, to an unlawful and unscriptural bachelorhood.

O Murtagh, you are daily discovering the false, while learning the true. There are opportunities now before you to be seized immediately. We wish for you, not only that you lift your voice as a preacher of the true Cross in the streets of our cities, but that you shall *revisit your own land* and lovingly entreat your own people that they come out from all deceptions of men, from all superstitions of a false faith, from sin and vanity, to the loving and living Saviour. O Murtagh, as Christ came to seek and to save the lost, so, imitating His unselfish example and seeking divine power from His Spirit, go forth on a like errand.

“Go with the Name of Jesus to the dying,
And speak that Name in all its living power.”

Remember the true saying of a Dublin archbishop: "If our religion is not true, we are bound to change it; if it is true, we are bound to propagate it." You found your religion false; it was yours only by birthright, not by personal conviction: you renounced it for a faith which saves and satisfies; then go and propagate it, not indeed to make proselytes to a new creed, but to make converts to Christ, our glorious Immanuel.

Nor wonder, O brother, that there are thousands of Romanists, bishops, priests, and people, in this and other lands, hungering for the bread of life, but *rather wonder* that THE GREAT OPPORTUNITY is not appreciated by Christians generally. In the city where you found yourself a stranger you paced the hot flags with bleeding feet and breaking heart; in that city, where wealth inconceivable is amassed; where philanthropy stirs the breast of unselfish men and consecrated women; where noble, self-denying Christian work is done to redeem the drunkard, to reform the harlot, to elevate the degraded, and increase the comfort of the poor; — wonder, I say, O Murtagh, that where churches are erected at enormous cost; where expensive hospitals are built and richly endowed; where numberless missions are sup-

ported by the good and the great,—there are few friends ready to help priest or nun who voluntarily decides to sever his or her connection with a false Church that he or she may freely serve the Lord Christ. The transition period is the most trying, when leaving the comforts of home and the companionship of friends to face the stern realities of life in a cold and heartless world. Wonder then, my hero, that, as yet, no man blest with this world's goods has consecrated a portion of it to such a worthy enterprise; that noble, generous men and women have neglected an opportunity for incalculable good, which, if rightly utilized, may result in educating, encouraging, and equipping a band of converted Romanists who may speedily solve the problem of Ireland's evangelization, and prove themselves worthy to cope with the pressing evils which endanger the peace of this Republic. Why may not converted priests become the evangelizers of the raw Irish emigrant; why may they not enlighten him that he shall not henceforth become the ready tool of the corrupted politician, whose love for the Irish race is the lust of power and the greed of self-interest.

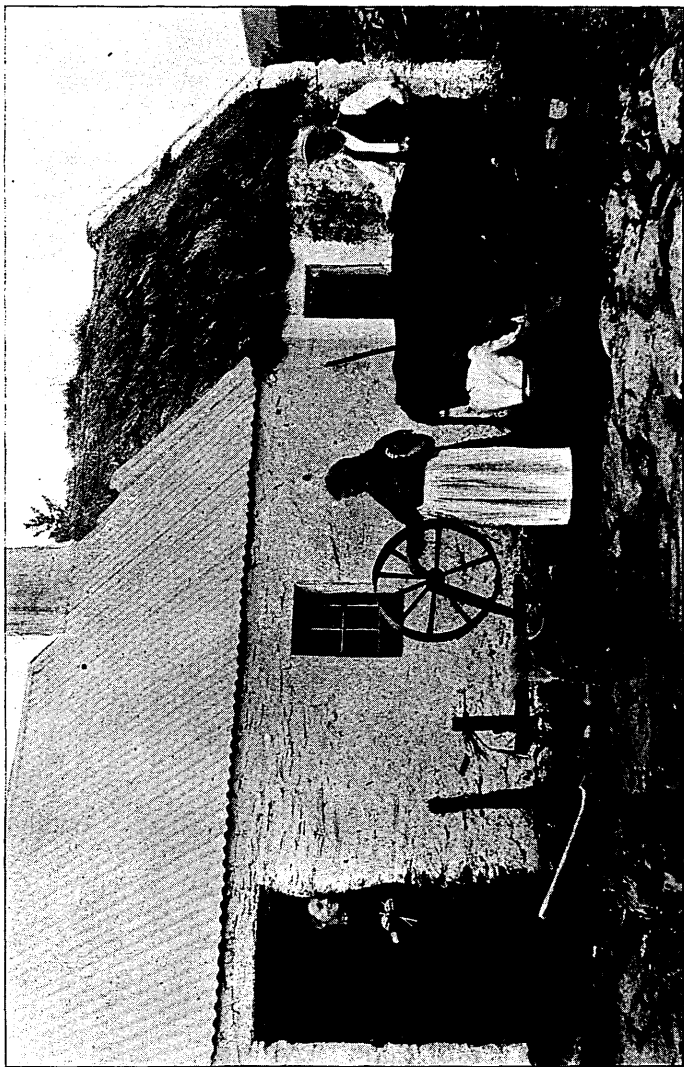
The Americanized Irish Catholic is losing reverence for the traditions of his fatherland

and faith in the superstitions of his religion. He discards the legends of St. Patrick in proportion as he studies the authentic prayers and confessions of that great missionary-evangelist; he loses faith in holy water, sacred shrines, blessed rags, and celestial relics, as he studies with independent thought and free judgment the religious problems of the day. But where the hydra-headed serpent of infidelity is turned loose, where its destructive power is the admiration of bold blasphemers, the Irish race, notwithstanding their deep reverence for sacred things, are exposed to the fangs of the monster. There are priests still within the pale of the Catholic Church who have warned the public against the blasphemies of agnosticism; in polemical warfare they have worsted the infidel, but, alas! they have failed to direct the serpent-bitten to the only remedy provided for their salvation. Upon you, O Murtagh, and others who have known by blessed experience the thoroughness of the cure, rests the responsibility of proclaiming to the Irish race at home and abroad the glad tidings, that, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting. For God so loved the world as to give

His only begotten Son : that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting." (John 3 : 14-17. Douay, V.)

Nor shall I wonder, O Murtagh, if through the power of the Holy Spirit you give your life unreservedly to that loftiest work on earth, namely, winning sinners to Christ for salvation, as they hear from your lips the divine Gospel of the Grace of God. And perhaps *in the near future* our Christian people will seize upon the golden opportunity of supporting the home of Christ's Mission *for the shelter and training of converted priests*, who are the best qualified missionaries to the Catholic people, whether found on foreign soil or still nourished at the torn breast of Mother Erin.





An Irish Family—A Home of Industry.

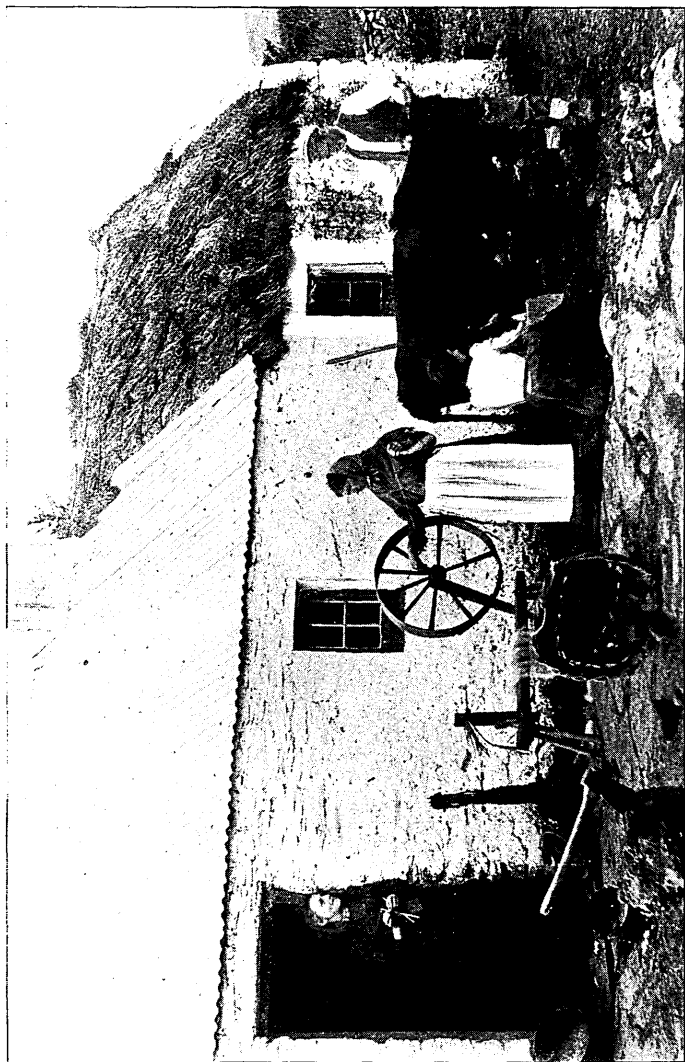
THE CALL OF THE MASTER TO ERIN.

BIRTHPLACE of poetic dreams,
 Mother of romantic streams,
 With thy lakes and mountains hoary,
 Vales renown'd in song and story,
 Waving woods and fertile plains,
 Scenes where virgin beauty reigns; —
 Erin! cradled by the sea,
 Rise! The Master calleth thee!

Beautiful without, — within
 Error, superstition, sin,
 Blinded zeal, misled devotion, —
 Restless as the waves of ocean.
 Fierce in hate though strong in love,
 Varying as the clouds above: —
 This is not what thou should'st be;
 Rise! The Master calleth thee!

Heed not what false friends may say,
 Love and Duty point the way;
 Lay aside thy weeds of mourning,
 Gladly hail thy Lord's returning;
 Be again what thou hast been —
 "Isle of Saints," a garden green!
 Fling thy chains aside, be free!
 Rise! The Master calleth thee!

Ah! but light and life are fled!
 Can the Master raise the dead,
 Bring again the lov'd departed,
 Make the downcast buoyant-hearted?
 Long the night, and dark the skies,
 Can His Word make Light arise?
 Erin, yes! though dark it be.
 Up! E'en now He calleth thee!



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 Erin, yes! though dark it be.
 Up! E'en now He calleth thee!

Torn by fierce intestine strife
Wake to higher, holier life,
See the nations round thee growing,
Light advancing, knowledge flowing;
Dream not of thy days of youth,
This thy morning — seize the Truth;
God's own Truth can make you free,
Rise! In love He calleth thee!

Master, come! Thy word of might
Sounded once, and there was light;
See, we doubt Thy promise never, —
Faithful hearts are pleading ever
For the sunshine of Thy smile
To illumine this our Isle.
Let us Thy salvation see,
Master, come! we wait for Thee!

Morning Star of Hope and Love,
Shine on Erin from above!
Jesus, Source of true affection,
Thou the Life, the Resurrection,
Speak! Restore the dead to life,
Calm the waves of party strife,
That our Island, bless'd and free
May be given *entire* to thee!

Then our lakes of silver sheen,
Verdant plains and valleys green,
Rivers broad and flashing fountains,
Wooded hills and rocky mountains
Shall reëcho full and free
Earth's glad song of Jubilee;
Truth shall flourish as of yore,
God shall bless the Shamrock shore!

— *Alexander Stewart.*

APPENDIX.

I WISH to call the reader's special attention to the most improbable part of this story as detailed on page 65. Three months after that chapter had been written there appeared a pamphlet narrating the personal experiences of Rev. Thomas Connellan, formerly a Roman Catholic curate of Athlone, Ireland. The following article appeared in "The Roscommon Messenger," which the author of "Father Flynn" had not seen till quite recently:—

"The shock that the priests and people of Athlone received on Tuesday night last when the dreadful news reached the town, at about half-past eight o'clock, that Father Connellan's clothes had been found in a boat which had drifted on the shore of the Lough Ree, and that the reverend gentleman was missing since morning, can better be imagined than described. The people turned out *en masse* and rushed excitedly from one place to another inquiring into and discussing the lamentable occurrence, and boats were immediately manned by willing hands and a party with lanterns and other

necessaries started for the lake to search the island in the vain hope which so often precedes despair. In the meantime the people thronged the streets and the precincts of St. Peter's, and the suspense which was felt in the town during the absence of the boats was succeeded by the most heartfelt lamentations on their return at midnight after a fruitless journey.

“It was not until the following morning that people properly realized the shocking occurrence and that any of the circumstances surrounding the melancholy event could be realized. That Father Connellan left home shortly after twelve o'clock on Tuesday, having provided himself with a bag containing towels, etc., and proceeded up the lake in a boat is well known. After that, however, there are only theories and circumstances to tell of his sad and untimely fate.

“He was observed pulling leisurely about on the lake at about two o'clock, it is said, by some persons going towards Hudson's Bay, but that was the last that was seen of him. His boat was remarked drifting on shore at Ballyglass Hill at about four o'clock; and at about six o'clock a Mr. Hughes and a man named M'Donnell and his son, remarking the boat such a length of time there without an owner, went

towards it and discovered the clothes, which they at once recognized as those of a priest. On further examination Father Connellan's name was observed on the inside of the bag, and M'Donnell and his son brought the boat to Athlone and were the first to convey the sad news."

We now subjoin Father Connellan's own explanation of his disappearance, taken from his thrillingly interesting pamphlet. It vindicates my disposal of Father Flynn as within the bounds of probability. Nor will any incident of my narrative be found an exaggeration. We rejoice that Father Connellan is also a free man in Christ Jesus ; a true convert to the faith of the gospel. Thus he has written :—

"Tuesday, September 20, 1887, was my last day on the Shannon. I was sick almost to death, but the hope of speedy emancipation sustained me. After breakfast my parish priest had a talk with me about certain schools of which I had charge, and then I walked out of St. Peter's for ever. I had sent a Gladstone bag containing a secular suit of clothes to the boat, and determined at any risk to have done with my old life. It was a lovely day, bright and breezy, and the pull on the river soothed,

as it always did, my agitated nerves. I landed on the Leinster shore, near Carberry, deposited my secular clothes in some underwood, and pushed out into the river. I then undressed, dodged a fisherman for a little, and having plunged into the water swam ashore. I stood for a moment upon a green mound to have a last look at the Shannon, then dashed across some uplands, through a red bog, finally emerging on the railway. I might have run to Moate, I fancy, had I so desired. No baptism by water had ever wrought a more wonderful regeneration than had that plunge into the sunlit Shannon. The load of suffering and care which I had carried for years remained with my clerical garb in the boat. Never did blind Homer give expression to a greater truth than when he said :—

On the day that makes a bondman of the free,
Wide-seeing Zeus takes half the man away.

“For years I had been as wretched a slave as ever tugged at galley oar. Now I bounded a free man once again, and my old spirit had returned. I caught the evening train from Moate, and had my first sound sleep for many months in Dublin that night. Next morning I crossed from Kingstown, and about six o’clock in the

evening stepped out in London, friendless and unknown, in a wilderness of five millions of souls. But the God who befriended the Judæan shepherd lad when sold in Egypt took care of me."

Father Connellan is now at the head of the Mission which bears his name, in the city of Dublin, and is also editor of *The Catholic*. His brother Joseph is his faithful fellow-laborer. They are both zealously preaching the Gospel of the Grace of God and many catholics are won to Christ through their earnest labors. His parents and sisters have eventually forsaken the teachings of Rome and have become humble disciples of the Lord Jesus.



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